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UNDER THE BANNER OF THE 'WAR' ON TERROR

WILLIAM GREIDER

THE CASE FOR WITHDRAWAL

The Editors

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LETTERS

Letters

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

PEOPLE'S HISTORY: NO TO WAR

Boston

■ As a longtime fan of Jonathan Schell's writing, let me take exception to one point in an otherwise valuable column ["Truth and Politics," May 10]. Schell talks of "the political reality that no antiwar candidate of modern times has ever made it into the White House." This is a mantra of the Democratic Leadership Council, and an argument for having only pro-war candidates, on pragmatic grounds. But even on those grounds it is wrong.

§ Woodrow Wilson was elected in 1916, while the war was raging in Europe, on an antiwar platform.

§ FDR was re-elected in 1940, pledging, with another war in Europe, to keep us out of it.

§ In 1964 Barry Goldwater, the hawk on Vietnam, was roundly defeated by Lyndon Johnson, who promised we would not go to war.

When McGovern was defeated in 1972 (a favorite gloat of prowar advocates), it's true he was an antiwar candidate. But by this time, Nixon was withdrawing troops from Vietnam, portraying himself as someone who would end the war, and the peace negotiations were close to completion in Paris. In 1992, Bush I, who had taken us to war in Iraq, was defeated by Clinton, who had been portrayed as an opponent of the war in Vietnam.

And look at the polls. Support for the war has gone down steadily to below 50 percent and will continue to go down as the disaster in Iraq becomes more and more clear. So "political reality" does not require a prowar candidate. Both morality and reality converge on this issue, and we should have a national campaign to push Kerry into recognizing this or to call for a grassroots rebellion at the Democratic National Convention to nominate a "national security through peace" candidate.

HOWARD ZINN

SCHELL REPLIES

New York City

■ As a longtime fan of Howard Zinn's writing, let me agree with the points he has made. But I take them as an addendum to my column rather than as an exception to it. Zinn widens the lens. I had in mind candidates who tried to stop a war in progress, as McGovern did. His examples are of Presidents who promised to head off wars. He's right that they, too, can be considered antiwar candidates. One difference between the two groups is political. It is much easier politically to make a promise about the future than to take responsibility for a present reality. The promise to stay out of war may contain all kinds of hidden conditions (I will stay out of war unless X, Y or Z happens), or be a mere piece of rhetoric,

hiding an actual intent to go to war (maybe Roosevelt's case), or at least a knowledge that he might be "forced" into it (Johnson?). And in fact all the Presidents Zinn mentions did either go to war or expand one. Still, the reminder that there is something deep in American opinion that wants peace is a positive fact that helps give me hope in the present. As for political reality, let's change it, just as he suggests. I'm on board.

JONATHAN SCHELL

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

New York City

■ Robert Borosage says in "Kerry: Fill in the Blanks" [May 17] that it's vital for John Kerry to lay out the big ideas: education, healthcare, jobs, energy and the environment. What's missing in his analysis is the "biggest idea" that war on Iraq is no good for America's working families. Not only is it illegal, immoral and irrational, resulting in thousands of dead and wounded on both sides, but it also guarantees that no money will be available for pressing domestic needs. Kerry must lay out a plan for getting our troops home safely. I suggest that's a big and winning idea.

DON SHAFFER, founding member
NY Working Families Party

DRESSED TO KILL?

London

■ Abraham Brumberg, reviewing Richard Evans's latest book ["The Descent Into Barbarism," May 10], says Evans exposed me "as a foul, mendacious apologist for and admirer of Adolf Hitler." We can judge Evans's objectivity from the previous book he wrote, on the January-March 2000 Lipstadt trial. Describing me, he refers to my shoddy suit and badly scuffed shoes. In fact, the pinstriped suit, purchased for the trial just a week before it began, cost £2,700 at Gieves & Hawkes, while the black shoes (£410 from Church's) were even newer. So much for Evans's powers of observation.

As for his views on me, let me quote—without a trace of humility—from Justice Gray's judgment in the Lipstadt trial: "As a military historian, Irving has much to commend him. For his works of military history Irving has undertaken thorough and painstaking research into the archives. He has discovered and disclosed to historians and others many documents which, but for his efforts, might have remained unnoticed for years. It was plain from the way in which he conducted his case and dealt with a sustained and penetrating cross-examination that his knowledge of World War II is unparalleled. His mastery of the detail of the historical documents is remarkable. He is beyond question able and intelligent. He was invariably quick to

spot the significance of documents which he had not previously seen. Moreover he writes his military history in a clear and vivid style. I accept the favorable assessment by Professor Watt and Sir John Keegan of the calibre of Irving's military history and reject as too sweeping the negative assessment of Evans."

So who is foul and mendacious now? It is hard to recognize Brumberg's Irving as being the same person.

DAVID IRVING

BRUMBERG REPLIES

Chevy Chase, Md.

■ I do not intend to answer Mr. Irving. I think he spends too much money on clothing.

ABE BRUMBERG

NO 'WAR' = NO 'ENEMY ALIENS'

Brooklyn, NY

■ In "Guantánamo, Revisited" [May 3], David Cole departs from his usual excellent legal coverage in his analysis of the pending Supreme Court cases on the rights of "enemy aliens." First, the United States is not at war with terrorism, as one cannot bring military force to bear on a concept or idea. Nor can this nation be at war with Al Qaeda, a criminal entity that commits mayhem, similar to the Ku Klux Klan. While it is entirely appropriate to bring adequate force to arrest such conspirators, such police action can only metaphorically be called "war"—the Bush Administration's linguistic prestidigitation to justify its militarized foreign and repressive domestic policies. We should not unconsciously allow this sleight of hand.

Second, the concept of "enemy alien" as a category for those held by the state should be given no legitimacy. There are of course criminal defendants, and there is a category for prisoners of war, both having well-recognized rights. But it is because these rights are so well recognized that the Administration is so bitterly opposed to treating the Hamdis, the Padillas or the Guantánamo detainees as such—or, with regard to categorizing them as POWs, maybe because there isn't a real war, they refuse the category.

Third, the Al Qaeda suicide bomber with nuclear weapons need not be detained as an "enemy combatant." Like the Klan member on the way to firebombing a home, such a person can be fairly and lawfully arrested within our borders; held without bail on the reasonable supposition that s/he would flee; indicted and tried for weapons possession, conspiracy, criminal terrorism, RICO violations and attempted murder; and then sentenced to a penal term; that is, if there is real evidence, beyond the President's or an anonymous informant's say-so.

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EDITORIALS

Time to Leave

We have paid a heavy price for the Bush Administration's unnecessary and illegal invasion of Iraq: more than 800 American soldiers dead; more than 4,500 wounded or maimed; and \$120 billion wasted on a war and occupation that has sullied our country's image in the world, undercut our moral authority and poisoned Arab and Muslim minds against us for decades to come. We will pay an even heavier price if we "stay the course," as the Administration and many Democrats urge. If, as war supporters claim, our goals in Iraq (now that we've lost the rationale of hunting down weapons of mass destruction) are stability and democracy, we are proceeding in exactly the wrong way. In the eyes of most Iraqis, American forces have long since ceased to be nation-builders and instead are occupying forces that knock down their homes, bomb their mosques and abuse and humiliate their fellow citizens. The occupation, like other occupations throughout history, has generated a growing popular resistance that cannot be defeated militarily. It is time to change course.

We can start by turning over real sovereignty to the interim Iraqi government. However imperfect this new entity may be, it will have a better chance of establishing at least modest legitimacy if the United States treats it, in private and public, not as a puppet regime but as an autonomous government.

We can also announce that US troops will no longer engage in offensive operations and that we will pull out our forces, with the goal of total withdrawal by the end of the year. At the same time, we can try to persuade the United Nations to establish a multinational peacekeeping force to take over after our departure, and we can pledge to contribute to that effort in whatever way the international community regards as appropriate, including the possible participation of US troops.

To take these steps is not to "abandon" Iraq. Rather it is to as-

sist in producing the stability we claim to want. The United States should continue to help Iraq by providing economic and humanitarian assistance and by supporting UN efforts to aid the interim government in conducting the earliest possible elections. This government should have authority over the economy and oil revenues and command over the country's security forces, as well as the right to set terms for the operation of any foreign troops on its soil. Washington should announce that it will pay reparations toward the rebuilding of Iraq to compensate for the devastation wrought by the US invasion and occupation. And it should renounce any interest in controlling Iraqi assets and in establishing US military bases. Only by yielding political and economic control in Iraq and disengaging our forces, while supporting UN nation-building efforts in a disinterested way, can we hope to reverse the growing rage in the Arab world and halt the current spiral of violence.

Two arguments are advanced—including by many well-meaning American liberals—against withdrawal. The first is that we owe it to the Iraqis whose lives we have violently disrupted to remain. In this view, withdrawal is tantamount to condemning Iraq to chaos. The second argument, a corollary to the first, is that an unstable, ungovernable Iraq will become a haven for extremists.

Although these concerns are serious, neither argument holds up under scrutiny. If the United States withdraws its forces, Iraq could face a violent power struggle between Sunnis and Shiites, Arabs and Kurds or between rival factions of the same sectarian group. But the risks must be weighed against the fact that US forces themselves are a major cause of the current instability. The troops there now are doing little to provide security for postwar reconstruction; they—and those seen to be cooperating with them—are the target of a widening guerrilla war against what is seen as an oppressive occupying power. More American forces will not change that logic; on the contrary, a harsher military campaign will only cause further alienation, turning even more Iraqis—Shiites as well as Sunnis—against us. Furthermore, we are not in a position to repair

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the divisions among a people whose language we do not speak and whose traditions we hardly understand; indeed, to the extent that we have succeeded thus far in unifying Iraq's fractured population, it has been in opposition to the American occupation.

With regard to the second argument, that withdrawal would inspire Islamic radicals to flock to Iraq, again, a well-coordinated withdrawal is more likely to deprive these extremists of a pretext, and a context, for future attacks. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak warned that a US invasion would create "a hundred bin Ladens," and the longer we stay, the more such extremism will be fostered. It is our respect for the will of the Iraqi people that will deprive Islamic radicals of their greatest rallying cry.

The current debate in Washington over Iraq is a peculiar one. Whether the topic is how many troops to send, or the intentions of UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, or the relationship of state and mosque, or the partition of the country, the conversation is conducted in splendid isolation from the Iraqi people whose fate is being decided. The disconnect reveals much about US policy-makers and pundits, who cannot accept that US military power will not decide Iraq's future. Underlying it is the unspoken yet powerful fear that if we "lose" Iraq, our "credibility" will suffer an irreparable blow. But Iraq is not ours to lose. The issue is not what we want (or fear) but what Iraqis want.

The recent surge of support for the uprising in Iraq has begun to disabuse even this Administration of the notion that the fighting is confined to Baathist "dead-enders" and foreign jihadists. In a poll taken by the well-regarded Iraq Center for Research and Strategic Studies before the release of the Abu Ghraib prison abuse photos, 82 percent of Iraqis said they now oppose US occupation forces, and a large majority want them to leave. As important, many Iraqi leaders once considered sympathetic to the occupation have now broken with the Coalition Provisional Authority or have intervened, in the case of the battles of Falluja and Najaf, to alter what they considered to be a misguided US military strategy. After Abu Ghraib, no Iraqi leader can demand anything less than the full return of Iraqi sovereignty, including control over the country's military and police forces. No less an American proxy than Ahmad Chalabi has refashioned himself as a militant opponent of his former patrons.

Within the UN Security Council, France and Russia are now echoing these Iraqi demands and are threatening to oppose any new Security Council resolution that does not give Iraqis full control over their future. We should heed these voices not only because they offer an honorable way out for the United States but because they increase the chances for a stable Iraq. Contrary to the views of those perpetuating the occupation, an internationally agreed-upon US disengagement from Iraq would not be a victory for terrorism or jihadism but for international law and the principle of popular sovereignty. That would be a good thing in today's Middle East. If that region is to become a more secure and democratic place, the United States must first relinquish the dream of remaking it in its image. Instead, we should learn how to work with others, through international diplomacy and programs of economic assistance, to help those who want our help.

We also must identify those responsible for America's catastrophic errors. George W. Bush and his advisers, so reckless with

COMMENT

American and Iraqi lives (more than 10,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed in this war) and so heedless of the consequences of their Iraq policies, must be held accountable—through investigations by Congress and at the ballot box in November.

The current tragedy in Iraq can be laid at the door of an Administration that thought it could defy international law and the politics of the Arab world. It went to war without the consent of the UN Security Council and without any understanding of how the Iraqi people would receive an American occupation. We cannot undo this terrible misjudgment or the damage it has done. But we can avoid compounding the harm we have already inflicted by listening to what the Iraqis are telling us: to give them back their country and leave.

COMMENT

Kerry's War Strategy

ELECTION MATTERS

On the day Senator John Kerry gave a Big Speech on national security, Win Without War—a coalition of forty-two antiwar organizations—called for the Administration to set a specific date for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. (It did not say what day that should be.) The week before, James Steinberg and Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution proposed that the United States declare it will recall its troops by late 2005, after the election of an Iraqi government and the adoption of a Constitution. (Steinberg was a deputy national security adviser for President Clinton.) Their Brookings colleague, Ivo Daalder, also an alumnus of Clinton's national security team, favors a pullout by the end of this year.

But Kerry, although he blasted Bush for his arrogant, reckless, counterproductive foreign policy, made no reference to removing troops by a particular date. He reiterated the position he had laid out weeks earlier: Internationalize the mess in Iraq, bring in more NATO troops, appoint an international high commissioner, expand the training of Iraq's security forces. In pursuit of stabilizing Iraq, he has even been open to deploying more US troops in the short run. Kerry is nuancing his way through the dilemma of Iraq and consequently has not unveiled a bold approach that stands in sharp contrast to the Bush policy, which has been drifting (reluctantly) toward his ideas. Kerry's take boils down to this: Bush screwed it up—I can do better. This is indeed an important distinction, and perhaps it's the best Kerry can offer since he's not calling for disengagement. But if a policy (if not yet a political) split is developing between Kerry and antiwar Democrats, how might he respond?

There are debates on Iraq within Kerry's foreign policy team. "For a while," says one of those advisers, "the debate was whether it was better not to offer an Iraq plan. Now there's a continuing discussion on how to deal with the changing realities in Iraq." This conversation is taking place within a senior group of a dozen advisers headed by Rand Beers, a counterterrorism specialist who resigned from the Bush White House. The group includes James Rubin, a former State Department spokesman; Nancy Stetson, a

longtime Kerry Senate aide; Jonathan Winer, a former Kerry aide and past State Department official; Lee Feinstein, former deputy director of the State Department's policy planning staff; Daniel Feldman, a former Clinton National Security Council officer; and former ambassador Joseph Wilson. Several foreign policy big-foots—Madeleine Albright, Sandy Berger, Richard Holbrooke, Senator Joe Biden—regularly counsel Kerry. The important discussions come, according to another Kerry aide, when Kerry talks to "whoever he trusts, like Holbrooke and Berger. He's been on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He carries a lot of this around in his own head. He has strong ideas himself."

Kerry appears to feel no pressure—from policy wonks, Ralph Nader or peaceniks—to call for removing the troops. The deliberations within the campaign have not focused on military disengagement. "It was clear to everyone," one Kerry adviser says, "that cutting and running was not the right approach and that this can't be an American-only operation, that we have to broaden the international role dramatically. But a question has been, How hard do you hit the President? And we haven't engaged the issue of an exit date at this point. It's politically difficult because that does look like cutting and running. Kerry has to establish that he's steely enough to do the job." Acknowledging that Kerry's highly refined position on the war has not helped his campaign, the adviser says, "These are the broad strokes: Senator Kerry has a plan and the Administration doesn't, and we are where we are because this Administration went off half-cocked. Is that the silver bullet everyone is looking for? Probably not."

Another campaign adviser on national security says, "Most of Kerry's advisers want to get US troops out as quickly as possible. The issue is how specific to be. Perhaps there will be more political pressure for a direct pullout. But while I disagreed with him over his vote to authorize Bush to go to war, I've come round to thinking he has rather good political instincts about these matters." Holbrooke, for one, opposes setting a date for removing troops. "It means," he explains, "hard-liners get harder and wait you out. A hard date increases the chances of civil war. It's irresponsible. I don't know if Kerry agrees with me."

A Democratic foreign policy expert close to key Kerry advisers observes, "Kerry is playing it very cautiously. It's a prevent-defense kind of game. He's counting on Bush to keep making mistakes and is playing out the clock. I'm skeptical of it. But it could work. My fear is he's not setting a strong enough foundation for people not only to reject Bush but to embrace Kerry." Some Kerry advisers, he says, have been pushing for a starker differentiation in policy. But Holbrooke notes that the issue is the man, not the plan: "In temperament, style and experience, nothing could be more different than John Kerry and George Bush. That's more important than Kerry's plan, especially when the situation changes every day. The demands for Kerry to be even more specific are misguided."

"Here's the problem," says a Democratic foreign policy expert not affiliated with the Kerry campaign. "He has already tacked right, left and right. He voted for the war while arguing against it. Then he voted against the \$87 billion for it. Then he said we need more troops and to stay as long as needed. As Bush tacks in his direction, he can't tack again and do what Steinberg and

COMMENT

O'Hanlon advocate. One of Kerry's big weaknesses is the flip-flopping charge the Republicans have used against him. He may have no choice but to let events in Iraq be a referendum on Bush. Sometimes a rope-a-dope strategy can lead to a technical knockout in fifteen rounds."

A member of Kerry's senior foreign policy squad reports, "The policy is pretty much set. We'll have to see what happens after the June 30 handoff of sovereignty." He notes that part of Kerry's indictment of Bush is that Bush has been "unwilling to adjust or admit mistakes." Antiwar Democrats, eager to see Bush booted, are not likely to lodge that charge against Kerry. Still, Kerry has to hope that both events and slices of his party's base do not turn against him in the coming months. DAVID CORN

CACI and Its Friends

In his now-famous report on Abu Ghraib prison, Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba identified Steve Stefanowicz, a civilian interrogator employed by CACI International, as having "allowed and/or instructed" MPs to abuse and humiliate Iraqi prisoners and as giving orders that he knew "equated to physical abuse." Taguba charged that Stefanowicz was one of four people, including a contract interpreter employed by Titan Corporation and two military intelligence officials, who were "either directly or indirectly responsible" for the abuse. On May 21 the Justice Department opened a criminal investigation into an unnamed civilian contractor in Iraq after receiving a referral from the Defense Department.

Unlike Titan, which fired a translator suspected by Taguba of sexually humiliating detainees, CACI, which has twenty-seven interrogators working under Army command in Iraq, has taken a defiant stance on Taguba's allegations. On May 27, J.P. "Jack" London, CACI's longtime chairman and CEO, told securities analysts that CACI is unaware of "any specific charges" against its employees but is "working diligently to get the facts." He added, "We feel we've done a fine job for the United States Army," and said that "our work and integrity will come shining through." CACI declined comment for this article. Stefanowicz, through his attorney, has denied any wrongdoing.

CACI's history and operating philosophy provide valuable clues to its activities at Abu Ghraib. Based in Arlington, Virginia, the company was founded in 1962 by two men affiliated with the Air Force's RAND Corporation. For the next thirty-five years, it grew steadily by providing specialty software to the Pentagon and other government agencies, and in the late 1990s it plunged into the military-intelligence market. With the assistance of friends in high places, including Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage—a CACI director and consultant from 1999 to 2001, when he joined the Bush Administration—CACI entered the small universe of companies providing information technology and services to military units devoted to countering terrorism, a strategy once known to military planners as "asymmetric warfare." Since 9/11, CACI has emerged as one of the most unabashed corporate backers of Bush's foreign policy and a key supporter of the military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Even as I speak, men and women from CACI are forward de-

ployed, worldwide, where the Army finds itself fighting this new century's most heinous war—the war on terrorism," London declared last October upon receiving a special award from the Association of the United States Army (a nonprofit organization that describes itself as "fostering public support of the Army's role in national security"), according to CACI's website. "We will be successful and victorious in eliminating this fanatical horror." In 2002 London said he had come up with a "simpler way" to define asymmetric warfare: "Not fighting fair." Those engaged in such tactics, he said, "embrace barbarism. And their ultimate goal is not victory, but absolute devastation." One of CACI's specialties is "social networks" analysis, which involves mapping relationships among terrorist networks and their civilian supporters—exactly what the US Army interrogators at Abu Ghraib were after. Such techniques are also embraced by the Israeli army in its confrontations with Palestinian militants in the West Bank and Gaza, and may explain the special award London received in January from Ariel Sharon's defense minister, Shaul Mofaz.

CACI's relationship with Armitage—a veteran of US covert operations who worked undercover with the CIA's infamous Phoenix assassination squads in Vietnam—underscores its political savvy. When he was elected a CACI director in 1999, Armitage was a member of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board and president of Armitage Associates, a consulting firm with a long list of powerful clients that included Boeing, Unocal, Texaco, Goldman Sachs and the Brown & Root subsidiary of Halliburton. Price Floyd, Armitage's press officer at the State Department, said Armitage played a minor role at the company and "didn't consult with CACI on its contracts." But the company itself indicates that Armitage's advice was critical to CACI's growth. After he joined the Bush Administration, CACI said Armitage had provided "valuable guidance on CACI's strategic growth plans and the federal government and Defense Department markets." CACI's current directors include Barbara McNamara, former Deputy Director of the National Security Agency, and Arthur Money, former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence.

Last year, CACI earned \$507 million in IT revenues from the government, making it the country's seventeenth-largest federal IT contractor—behind the multibillion-dollar leaders Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman but ahead of prominent contractors like Halliburton, Bechtel and AT&T. Sixty-five percent of its revenues came from the Defense Department, where CACI's clients include the Army's Intelligence and Security Command and V Corps, which has several units in Iraq that have been deeply involved in US counterinsurgency operations. Indeed, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been very good for the company: In late May London predicted that CACI's revenues for the first quarter of the 2005 fiscal year will top \$360 million, a 50 percent improvement over the same period the year before.

With its earnings, CACI has gone on an acquisition binge, buying eight companies since August 2002. One of those companies, Premier Technology Group, which CACI acquired in May 2003, is the source of its current troubles. In what appears to have been a byzantine bit of bureaucracy, the contracts CACI inherited are managed by the Interior Department's National Business Center,

Grabcock for Freedom Award
Natalie Walcott, D.D. Officer

I AM NOT AN AMERICAN

who confuses politics with patriotism.

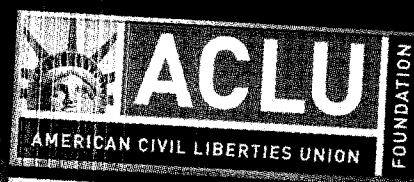
I AM AN AMERICAN

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COMMENT

which has the authority to extend those contracts under "blanket purchase agreements." Frank Quimby, Interior's spokesman, said the US Army in Iraq specifically requested CACI's interrogation and intelligence support services at the prison; the purchase agreements for those services, he said, were signed on August 13 and December 3, 2003—a time when the worst abuses were taking place. As of mid-May, neither Interior nor the Army had "found any indications of faulty performance" with CACI, Quimby said. Those contracts and agreements, however, are being investigated by the Interior Department's Inspector General and the General Services Administration and could force the government to terminate CACI's ability to bid on future contracts.

Any investigation of CACI should also focus on the higher-ups who approved these contracts, as well as any Administration officials who may know about CACI's relationship with military intelligence. The military's abuse of Iraqi prisoners is bad enough, but the privatization of such practices is simply intolerable.

TIM SHORROCK

Tim Shorrock (tshorrock51@hotmail.com), a freelance journalist, has been reporting about globalization and finance for over twenty years.

The Maxwell Affair

Last November *Foreign Affairs*, the prestigious journal of the Council on Foreign Relations, published a review of *The Pinochet File: A Declassified Dossier on Atrocity and Accountability*, a new book by Peter Kornbluh, director of the National Security Archive's Chile Documentation Project. Written by the council's chief Latin America expert, Kenneth Maxwell, the review upset two former statesmen who figure prominently in the book and who also happen to be influential actors at the council: Henry Kissinger and his longtime associate William Rogers. In May, after an acrimonious exchange between Rogers and Maxwell in *Foreign Affairs*—an exchange that Maxwell insists was abruptly curtailed as a result of pressure from Kissinger and Rogers—Maxwell resigned in protest from the

council. His departure raises questions about intellectual freedom at the council; about editorial independence at *Foreign Affairs*, where Maxwell spent eleven years as Western Hemisphere book reviewer; and about Kissinger's and Rogers's influence on the nation's pre-eminent foreign policy think tank.

Maxwell's review, "The Other 9/11: The United States and Chile, 1973," was not a slashing polemic but a measured essay on American intervention in Chile in the 1970s. Maxwell expressed certain reservations about *The Pinochet File*, yet acknowledged that Kornbluh had assembled a dossier that "significantly amplifies" our historical knowledge of the campaign against President Salvador Allende, who was overthrown by a military coup on September 11, 1973. Halfway through the essay, the reviewer directed his ire at the Nixon-era policy-makers—Kissinger chiefly among them—who contributed to Allende's demise: "What is truly remarkable," Maxwell noted, "is the effort—the resources committed, the risks taken, and the skullduggery employed—to bring a Latin American democracy down, and the meager efforts since to build democracy back up. Left to their own devices, the Chileans might just have found the good sense to resolve their own deep-seated problems. Allende might have fallen by his own weight, victim of his own incompetence, and not become a tragic martyr to a lost cause."

Maxwell's essay prompted a smoldering letter to the editor from Rogers, who worked under Kissinger at the State Department from 1974 to 1977 and is currently vice chair of Kissinger Associates. "The myth that the United States toppled President Salvador Allende of Chile in 1973 lives," Rogers proclaimed in the January/February issue. "There is...no smoking gun. Yet the myth persists. It is lovingly nurtured by the Latin American left and refreshed from time to time by contributions to the literature like Peter Kornbluh's *The Pinochet File* and Kenneth Maxwell's review of that book."

Allende's fall, Rogers declared, was the result of "his disastrous economic policies, his attack on Chile's democratic institutions [and] the wave of popular resentment that swept the Chilean military to power." Rogers hastened to minimize US involvement in two highly controversial matters, both of which figure prominently in *The Pinochet File*: the murder of Chilean Gen. René Schneider in 1970 and Operation Condor, a state-sponsored terror network set up by Pinochet that from 1975 to 1977 targeted critics all over the Western Hemisphere and Europe. Among them was Orlando Letelier, Pinochet's most prominent opponent in the United States, who was murdered, along with American Ronni Moffitt, by a car bomb in Washington, DC, in 1976.

Round one of the Maxwell-Rogers exchange concluded with a rejoinder by Maxwell in the same issue. "William Rogers overreaches," Maxwell wrote. "To claim that the United States was not actively involved in promoting Allende's downfall in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary verges on incredulity." Maxwell went on to address a very delicate matter—Kissinger's and Rogers's knowledge of Operation Condor. Maxwell (following Kornbluh) insisted that the murder of Orlando Letelier, in particular, was "a tragedy that might have been prevented," since "other assassinations of opposition figures planned by Condor in

(Continued on Page 23)

CALVIN TRILLIN

THE UNITED STATES DESCRIBES THE WONDERS OF SOVEREIGNTY TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE

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KATHA POLLITT

Desperately Seeking Health Insurance

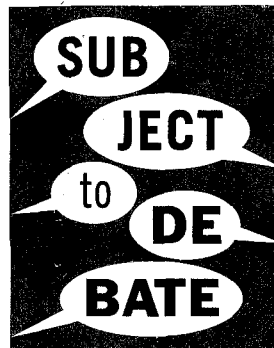
As crises go, medical insurance is not a very sexy one. It's not that no one talks about the 43.6 million uninsured, skyrocketing drug costs, emergency rooms crammed with patients in search of routine care or the 18,000 Americans who, according to the Institute of Medicine, die each year for lack of care. Every politician has a stump speech and a plan—usually a rather complicated one. (Insert your Kerry joke here if you must, but give the man credit—at least he'll cover most people.) The simple solution would be a single-payer system like Canada's, a mantra the left has been humming for decades, but where's the big, irate, energetic movement for it? Health coverage doesn't seem to bring out the fire-breathers, like, oh, gay marriage or "partial-birth" abortion or whether "under God" belongs in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Why is that? Maybe we've been living this way so long that we've just accepted it, like the housing crisis. Maybe the kinds of people who are uninsured are the sort voters are all too used to ignoring. Maybe people don't want to pay for universal coverage (even though they tell pollsters they're willing). And maybe the political classes, who have good coverage and money and tend to live in places with lots of specialists and state-of-the-art hospitals, fear they'd have to stand in line under a Canadian-style system, as the *New York Times* is always warning them they would.

While wonks debate, the crisis deepens. Dr. Michele Barry, who directs tropical medicine at Yale Medical School, sent me her notes on three patients she saw within a single week recently at Yale-New Haven Hospital:

Mr. N. An Italian-American man in his early 50s who moved from Florida to New Haven to let his wife die up near her family in Maine. He went 250,000 dollars in debt trying to self-pay for care for his wife, who was diagnosed with cervical cancer over a year ago. He was admitted to my service with hyperkalemia (high potassium) due to using expensive medicines he could get for free from pharmaceutical donations—these were inappropriate for his kidney problems, which were caused by diabetes. He could not even afford the long-acting insulin we wanted to give him. His reply to my telling him he might die if we didn't treat his potassium was: "Doc, maybe that's for the better."

Mr. M. A 38-year-old auto mechanic who was admitted in narcotic withdrawal. A year ago, he was the victim of a freak accident when a clutch released and a car rolled back into him. He developed back pain which subsequently caused him to seek several neurosurgical opinions, but nothing was done because he couldn't afford follow-up appointments. He became addicted to the OxyContin the doctors prescribed. Unemployed, disabled and out of money due to medical costs of imaging and doctors, he lost his home and was forced to move to a motel and file for bankruptcy. He came into the hospital when he could not afford his motel room or any more narcotics and thus started to withdraw.



Ms. W. A 40-year-old black woman from North Carolina who came into my service with hypertensive emergency (escalating blood pressure) and heart failure. She had stopped taking any blood pressure medicines in order to save for her husband's kidney transplant. Due to her prolonged non-treatment, she developed irreversible heart damage.

As these tragic stories show, health insurance is about more than treating an immediate illness. Lack of insurance can precipitate an avalanche of trouble: job loss, debt, bankruptcy, more illness, inappropriate

charity treatment that worsens the original problem, prescription drug addiction, homelessness. The crisis doesn't even have to be yours: Mr. N.'s diabetes and Ms. W.'s hypertension—common, manageable conditions—became life-threatening because they skimped on their own medicine to help a spouse with an even bigger problem. In the case of Mr. N.'s wife, her fatal illness was itself possibly related to lack of preventive care because she didn't have health insurance: Cervical cancer is usually curable if caught early on by regular Pap smears.

Critics complain about the cost of universal coverage, but if you think of those 43.6 million uninsured as embedded in families, you have to count the privations endured by everyone in them as part of the true cost of the status quo. More money for a parent's doctor means less for the children's dentist—or summer camp, or college fund. Untreated or inadequately treated illness means stress and anxiety for the whole family. When a patient goes bankrupt, like Mr. M.—and healthcare costs are involved in 50 percent of bankruptcies, which have risen 400 percent in the past twenty-five years—the whole family suffers. Conservatives are always worrying about divorce—what about divorce as triggered by the financial and emotional stresses of uninsured illness? Maybe universal coverage could be sold as a family value.

Dr. Barry, who moves mountains for her patients, is doing all that one doctor can do. She was able to arrange donated drugs for Ms. W. and Mr. N., as a temporary stopgap. But what will happen to them down the road? As for Mr. M., she writes, "We gave him a long-acting morphine compound—not OxyContin!—for his pain and are trying to find him a surgeon who will accept state insurance. Not one orthopedic in our area does this. He was last seen living in a shelter in town."

Clarification: Many, many readers objected to my claim in my last column that the money from the breast-cancer postage stamp goes to the Defense Department. I should have phrased it more carefully: The DoD receives 30 percent of the stamp revenues—for medical research into breast cancer, not, as some thought I implied, cluster bombs and homemade sado-porn. (Seventy percent goes to the National Institutes of Health.) Several letter writers argued that this funding is a good thing. Maybe so, but it nonetheless illustrates my general point: that the military is extending its tentacles deep into civilian life, often without our being aware of it. ■

ERIC ALTERMAN

Kerry's Dance

It may have the ring of cliché, but America's next presidential election will be among the most crucial events in contemporary history. Rarely in the modern era has the world seen such unchecked power exercised so ignorantly, arrogantly and with such profoundly counterproductive results as the Bush Administration's bait-and-switch invasion of Iraq. As Al Gore told an audience at NYU recently, "The unpleasant truth is that President Bush's utter incompetence has made the world a far more dangerous place and dramatically increased the threat of terrorism against the United States." The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), Gore noted, has reported that the Iraq conflict "has arguably focused the energies and resources of Al Qaeda and its followers while diluting those of the global counterterrorism coalition." Al Qaeda now boasts an army of more than 18,000 potential terrorists, with the Iraqi war "swelling its ranks."

The horror is slowly dawning on everyday Americans. In a recent ABC News/*Washington Post* poll, almost three-fifths of the people questioned disapproved of Bush's handling of the war—the highest level the survey has ever recorded. Meanwhile, a CBS survey revealed that just about two-thirds of those asked responded that the country was on "the wrong track," also the top level CBS has ever reached in the twenty years its pollsters have been asking the question.

Yet John Kerry remains roughly even with Bush in a straight-ahead matchup. There are many reasons for this. The Massachusetts liberal comes across as stiff and uncharismatic, and in America's personality-driven political culture, that matters far more than it should. Bush, moreover, has spent far more money on advertising than Kerry and has succeeded in casting him as an opportunistic "flip-flopper" among people who believe political ads. Much of the media, moreover, remain in thrall to Bush, having embedded themselves in this Administration's flight of ideological fancy and, like the *New York Times*'s Judith Miller, published its spoon-fed propaganda as gospel.

(Miller recently escaped any censure from the *Times* for passing along untrue stories about Iraq's weapons program, which is only fair, since it was the editors' job to rein in her uncritical embrace of convicted embezzler and possible Iranian spy Ahmad Chalabi. In a more recent example of the same type of shameless shilling for the Bush Administration, CNN's Kelli Arena reported "speculation that Al Qaeda believes it has a better chance of winning in Iraq if John Kerry is in the White House." This was arrant nonsense, as the IISS had just reported that Al Qaeda was using Bush's Iraq invasion as a recruiting tool, having been allowed to fully reconstitute itself owing to this Administration's criminal neglect.)

Kerry's primary problem is that he has so far failed to distinguish himself in a fundamental fashion from Bush on the one issue that has destroyed the President's credibility. Bush & Co. fooled Kerry into voting to give them the authority to go to war

**STOP THE
PRESSES**



back in 2002 on the basis of falsified evidence and meaningless promises, and Kerry has found himself in a straitjacket ever since. As the *Los Angeles Times*'s excellent Ron Brownstein notes, the Kerry campaign's foreign policy focus is "less on criticizing the president's policies than on questioning whether he could provide the international leadership to implement them." Brownstein quotes a Democratic foreign policy analyst worrying that "the best he will be able to say is that Bush is finally doing what I said to do all along."

The election's dynamic is further complicated by the unwelcome presence of political kamikaze bomber Ralph Nader, whose uncured self-delusion is leading him once again to convert the genuine idealism and narrow-minded narcissism of his supporters into another victory for the reactionary Republican right. With his hypercautious position on Iraq—"measured," in the opinion of the *New York Times*—Kerry risks leaving many of those who rightly see the war as a catastrophe with nowhere to go to express their outrage. As with the election of 1968, an increasingly antiwar electorate is being offered only prowar choices for the presidency. It is just possible, therefore, that Nader may once again insure Bush's "victory" in the election, dooming the world to four more years of a neoconservative imperialism and rogue American militarism.

How can this be avoided? Quite easily, if Kerry could only admit to the entire country what he told me and a bunch of other reporters back in December in Al Franken's living room: Like so much of the country—and its elite media—he made a terrible mistake in trusting George W. Bush. He underestimated both the fanaticism and incompetence of the President and his advisers and their willingness to mislead the country into war. He thought George Tenet's CIA reports were on the level. He imagined Colin Powell was more than just window-dressing.

Today Kerry can stake his claim—together with considerable political cover—alongside the truth-tellers of the Bush era: people like John DiIulio, Paul O'Neill, Richard Clarke, Joseph Wilson and generals Anthony Zinni and Eric Shinseki, who have seen their characters and reputations attacked for the sin of patriotism and professional responsibility. Without delving into too much hand-tying detail, he could promise America to extricate the nation from its hubristic Mesopotamian misadventure at the earliest possible moment. He could assure Americans that he will reunite our allies and the world community in an intelligent fight against Islamic terrorists whose enemy is civilization everywhere. He could reassure the nation that he will get America "back on track."

It is a simple, understandable message and one that is already implicitly endorsed by a majority of Americans. Unless the Democratic nominee rethinks his commitment to this neocon nightmare soon, he risks inviting a second Nader/Bush Administration, unshackled from the need to seek re-election, thereby unleashing its most belligerent and fanatical impulses. God help us. ■

ARTICLES

When President Bush called Americans to enlist in his "war on terror," very few citizens could have grasped the all-encompassing consequences of the proposition. The terrifying events of 9/11 were like a blinding flash, benumbing the country with a sudden knowledge of unimagined dangers. Strong action was recommended, skeptics were silenced and a shallow sense of unity emerged from the shared vulnerabilities. Nearly three years later, the enormity of Bush's summons to open-ended "war" is more obvious. It overwhelmed the country, in fact deranged society's normal processes and purposes with a brilliantly seductive political message: Terror pre-empts everything else.

What this President effectively accomplished was to restart the cold war, albeit under a new rubric. The justifying facts are different and smaller, but the ideological dynamics are remarkably similar—a total commitment of the nation's energies to confront a vast, unseen and malignant adversary. Fanatical Muslims replaced Soviet Communists and, like the reds, these enemies could be anywhere, including in our midst (they may not even be Muslims, but kindred agents who likewise "hate" us and oppose our values). Like the cold war's, the logic of this new organizing framework can be awesomely compelling to the popular imagination because it runs on fear—the public's expanding fear of potential dangers. The political commodity of fear has no practical limits. The government has the ability to manufacture more.

Nor is there any obvious ceiling on what the nation must devote—in JFK's famous phrase—"to pay any price, bear any burden" in defense of liberty and homeland. Long after the Soviet Union was recognized as a failed economic system, US intelligence agencies continued to warn that it was surpassing America's arsenal of defense and so new, much larger weapons must be built. The year before the Berlin wall fell, CIA analysts reported that Communist East Germany's economy was larger than West Germany's. People believed them. In much the same way, the worldwide network of supposed or potential allies of Osama bin Laden has been steadily expanded by government alerts since 9/11. These fanatical terrorists are not just in the Middle East; the same type has been spotted in East Asia and Africa, even South America. National security experts urge counterterror actions, just in case. Who can say the "intelligence" is wrong? How can citizens even weigh the "facts" when government keeps most of them secret?

"War on terror" is useful for the President, but irrational for the nation. Terrorism is not an enemy; it is a method of using violence to gain political objectives. Its tactics are usually employed by weaker, irregular groups against governments that possess organized armies and the modern means for waging war formally and more destructively (both methods of violence may target and destroy the lives of innocents). Terror campaigns are cruel by nature but in some instances are regarded as righteous, when the violence is used to liberate oppressed peoples from colonial rule, as in Vietnam or Ireland, the creation of Israel or even the United States.

Ronald Spiers, a retired diplomat who served as US ambassador to Turkey and Pakistan and as Assistant Secretary of State

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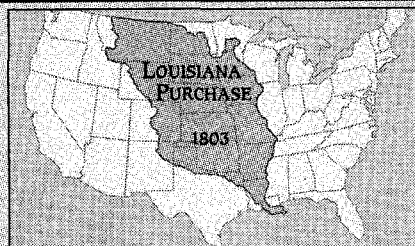
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for Intelligence, explained these distinctions in an incisive essay published in Vermont's *Rutland Herald*. "How do you win a 'war' against a tool that, like war itself, is a method of carrying on politics by other means?" Spiers asked. "A 'war on terrorism' is a war without an end in sight, without an exit strategy, with enemies specified not by their aims but by their tactics. Relying principally on military means is like trying to eliminate a cloud of mosquitoes with a machine gun.... It brings to mind Big Brother's...war in Orwell's *1984*. A war on terrorism is a permanent engagement against an always-available tool."

My advice for Americans is also an urgent warning: Get a grip, before it is too late. Take a hard look at your own fears, reconsider the probabilities of danger in the larger context of life's many risks and obstacles. The trauma of 9/11 stimulated infinite possibilities for worry—some quite plausible, but most inspired by remote what-if fantasies. A society bingeing on fear makes itself vulnerable to far more profound forms of destruction than terror attacks. The "terrorism war," like a nostalgic echo of the cold war, is using these popular fears to advance a different agenda—the re-engineering of American life through permanent mobilization. The transformation is well under way. The consequences, if left unchallenged, will be very difficult to reverse. Let us count them:

§ As a first consequence, politics collapsed. That is, the usual contentiousness of opposing viewpoints and disputed facts virtually evaporated before the sweeping logic of Bush's mobilization. With a few brave exceptions, Democrats embraced the premises of Bush's pronouncement, supported his plans for hot war and elaborated their own ideas for defending the homeland. Major media played an important role in the political passivity, as they whipped up the fear factor and fell into line behind Bush's "war." Critics asking questions were ignored or scolded for their timidity. Labor unions were told that the long-established rights of workers were not compatible with waging war on unknown terrorists.

Now that the war in Iraq has gone so badly and public doubts are growing rapidly, many more Democrats and even some Republicans are willing to attack the President's management, but still do not challenge the breadth and nature of his "war" commitment. Indeed, with ill-concealed relish, the Democratic Party "is attacking Bush from the right" on domestic security, as a Senate Democratic aide put it, waving the bloody shirt of 9/11 and accusing Republicans of failing to protect citizens on the endangered home front.

§ US foreign policy has been stood on its head. Every complexity and volatile force in global affairs has been redefined as subsidiary to terrorism and, in most cases, pushed aside. After decades of organizing and leading global alliances, the aggrieved superpower claims a new right for itself—to wage pre-emptive war (unilaterally if necessary and justified by its own facts) against any nation-state that supports terrorists or appears to tolerate their presence. The United States subsequently added another legitimizing cause for war: the defeat of brutal dictators so that democracy may be planted on alien soil. This claim is based on the

tenuous belief that democracies do not sponsor terrorist acts against innocent civilians. (For contrary evidence, see the history of CIA covert actions in the cold war.)

Between these two rationales, the world provides a very long list of potential battlefields and available adversaries, if Bush so chooses to target them. The strategic intent in Iraq, it seemed, was to compel by example: Conquer one rogue nation with overwhelming military force and others will fall into line. This approach assumes that national governments are the principal agents behind terrorist groups. If so, which nations are behind the ongoing chaos in Iraq? Must we invade them, too?

John Kerry, while he criticizes the unfolding chaos in Iraq, is not prepared to call the war a mistake or to abandon Bush's initial premise that pre-emptive invasion and wall-to-wall defenses are justified in these new circumstances of terrorist attacks. In total war, skepticism is weakness, silence is patriotic, admission of error is dishonorable. Throughout the cold war, this corrupted logic intimidated conventional politicians with fiendish effectiveness.

§ For the armed services and the arms industry, terror blew the lid off the Pentagon budget. Before September 2001 Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld was confronted with a severe budget crunch—the military-industrial complex's inflated appetite far surpassed the available money. Rumsfeld was losing the struggle, his "military reform" proposals

brushed aside by the Joint Chiefs and Congress. After 9/11 the military forces could have whatever they needed and much more. What politician would say no? More than \$300 billion in new spending has been added to the Pentagon budget in less than three years—most of it to fight two wars, but scores of billions were also devoted to beefing up security at military installations and for launching such long-sought (but terror-irrelevant) projects as the \$53 billion missile defense system. This high-tech anti-missile shield will allegedly protect the continental United States from North Korean missiles, but it still has not passed conclusive reliability tests. We'll probably never find out whether or not it works, but, like so many cold war concoctions, it may make people feel safer and stronger.

The \$300 billion is only a beginning. Once Iraq is resolved, the Pentagon will need more money to replenish munitions and replace destroyed vehicles, but also to restore troop strength, as reservists and regulars opt out in droves. Iraq will surely leave behind a public distaste for pre-emptive war, but given the vast and unknowable "threat," it would be irresponsible for military leaders not to prepare for the next war and the next one after that. Meanwhile, a new generation of expensive weapons systems, inherited from cold war planning, is approaching the production stage, and costs are soaring. In other words, the Pentagon's budget crunch is returning with a vengeance. Based on already known commitments, the "war on terror" will add another \$885 billion to federal deficits in the next ten years, according to the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (more than enough to finance a system of universal healthcare). Congressmen suggesting that a revival of the draft may be needed are not hallucinating.

§ The domestic context of American society may eventually

*What this President effectively
accomplished was to restart the cold
war, albeit under a new rubric.*

undergo the most drastic (and insidious) changes, if the current logic advances unchallenged. The quest for homeland security is heading, in ad hoc fashion, toward the quasi militarization of everyday life. So far more than \$120 billion in new spending has been devoted to constructing domestic protections, but each new project merely demonstrates how incomplete the homeland security system is—and how impossible an airtight defense would be for an open and free society. Yet nobody in Congress wants constituents left unprotected. So government is pushed to formulate larger and more grandiose plans—exotic technological schemes for surveillance and ready-response to ward off more of the infinite possibilities, just in case. Addressing fear begets more fear. If danger might lurk anywhere, maybe everything must be protected and policed [see sidebar on page 16].

The security systems involve computers, cameras, remote sensors, electronic alarms and bomb-sniffing dogs, but also require old-fashioned political monitors—government agents watching people for hints of dangerous intentions. Washington is assembling a “unified watch list” of potential troublemakers—their identities contributed by every federal agency, names that will be shared with local and state law enforcement. Any motorist stopped by a patrol officer can be electronically checked out with the FBI’s Terrorist Screening Center and held for questioning if the Feds desire. The initial list, Congress is informally advised, will contain the names of 120,000 citizens who, for one reason or another, might be regarded as a “threat.” An “agro-terrorist” identified by the Agriculture Department could be someone who likes to set fires in national forests or maybe a political activist trying to save trees. Neither type is known to associate with Osama bin Laden.

“When does a watch list become a blacklist? That’s the problem,” ACLU legislative counsel Timothy Edgar explained. The “lists” are proliferating, and once your name is on one, it’s extremely difficult to get off. The government has a “no-fly list,” used by airlines to bar passengers from boarding planes (a source of many Kafkaesque episodes of mistaken identity). The government also has a “shippers’ list” to block “suspects” from getting jobs at port terminals and aboard cargo ships. A new “Computer Assisted Passenger Profiling System” is collecting more names by “mining data” from the voluminous personal records of consumers/employees/citizens. The FBI’s long, sordid history of spying on and intimidating citizens—civil rights leaders, anti-war activists, political dissidents of the left and right—illustrates the possibilities.

§ Finally, the national economy is significantly altered too, because terrorism is industrial opportunity. Designing the software for new surveillance systems, building antiterror gadgets for homes and offices, developing new drugs to combat biological attacks, hiring more guards and guard dogs—all can now be regarded as defense production. Boeing got a \$1 billion no-bid contract to help airports and airlines organize their defenses. Marmion Air Services is selling explosion-proof air conditioning and refrigerators (“It truly is a very exciting time in the company’s history,” said CEO Wilbert Marmion). Taser International’s stock soared last year from \$4.04 to \$82.96. The Taser stun-gun can

incapacitate any terrorist who gets closer than twenty-one feet.

The government has invited private enterprise to come up with the technological fixes for terror—a familiar American response to complex problems—and untold billions are on the table as incentive. The bureaucratic chaos and lack of priorities at the Department of Homeland Security has frustrated many business contractors, but a crudely improvised “industrial policy” is emerging. The “terrorism war” directs major economic stimuli to key sectors—arms manufacturing, information technology, pharmaceuticals, biotech research and, of course, security hardware. Government has indemnified manufacturers of antiterror devices against consumer lawsuits, just in case the gadgets fail to work. Many other interests are clamoring for a piece of the action. The development capital provided by taxpayers to these “war” industries can be thought of as “terror pork.”

Altogether, the momentous alterations in government and society derive from Bush’s unilateral announcement of an un-

charted war. One should not assume the President himself fully grasped all of the many consequences in advance, any more than his team understood what they were getting

into in Iraq. But no matter. “War on terror” is a political slogan—not a coherent strategy for national defense—and it succeeds brilliantly only as politics. For everything else, it is quite illogical.

An important question remains for Americans to ponder: Why have most people submitted so willingly to a new political order organized around fear? Other nations have confronted terrorism of a more sustained nature without coming thoroughly unhinged. I remember living in London briefly in the 1970s, when IRA bombings were a frequent occurrence. Daily life continued with stiff-upper-lip reserve (police searched ladies’ handbags at restaurants, but did not pat down the gentlemen). We can only speculate on answers. Was it the uniquely horrific quality of the 9/11 attacks? Or the fact that, unlike Europe, the continental United States has never been bombed? For modern Americans, war’s destruction is a foreign experience, though the United States has participated in many conflicts on foreign soil. Despite the patriotic breast-beating, are we closet wimps? America’s exaggerated expressions of fear may look to others like a surprising revelation of weakness.

My own suspicion is that many Americans have enjoyed Bush’s “terror war” more than they wish to admit. Feeling scared can be oddly pleasurable, like participating in a real-life action thriller, when one is allied in imagined combat with a united country of brave patriots. The plot line is simple—good guys against satanic forces—and pushes aside doubts and ambiguities, like why exactly these people are out to get us. Does our own behavior in the world have anything to do with it? No, they resent us because we are so virtuous—kind, free, wealthy, democratic. The contest, as framed by Bush, invites Americans to indulge in a luxurious sense of self-pity—poor, powerful America, so innocent and yet so misunderstood. America’s exaggerated fear of unknown “others” is perhaps an unconscious inversion of its exaggerated claims of power.

The quest for homeland security is heading, in ad hoc fashion, toward the quasi militarization of everyday life.

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Orange Alert at Sebago

America's homeland security efforts are like a burlesque of the cold war struggle—randomly throwing money at the problem, periodically issuing dire alerts and indulging expensive versions of old-fashioned silliness. The hapless new Department of Homeland Security is spending many billions, but it is pulled this way and that because it cannot say reliably what should come first or even what the “threat” is. When anxious members of Congress ask when the DHS will complete its “comprehensive threat and vulnerability assessment” and an accompanying priority list of “essential capabilities,” the department responds, Not soon, perhaps in five years.

Meantime, officials have prepared for the worst on Sebago Lake, in Maine. Sebago supplies drinking water for Portland—imagine a deadly virus in the hands of bad people—so the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department spent some DHS money from Washington to buy a new patrol boat. The game wardens keep an eye out for suspicious characters while they also monitor the fish. Craighead County in northeastern Arkansas spent \$600,000 on hazmat suits and other antiterror paraphernalia. “We’ve got 60,000 people here, a university and two hospitals, and a lot of folks coming and going,” the county’s emergency coordinator explained. “We’ve got some good targets.”

Americans are urged by their government to mobilize themselves family by family (go to www.ready.gov for instructions). Create a “shelter-in-place” with duct tape and plastic sheeting and stock an emergency kit—reminiscent of the 1950s-era backyard fallout shelters. Make a family-readiness plan, just in case. If bioterrorism occurs, turn off the air conditioning. If you are ordered to evacuate, “take your pets with you, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters.” If the highway is being bombed, “pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake.” Aside from these scary thoughts, the government advises, “Don’t be afraid...Be Ready.”

On March 11, ten explosions ripped through four commuter trains in Madrid, killing almost 200 people and injuring more than 1,500. In Washington, officials pondered an embarrassing question: What about our trains? Of the billions already spent on transportation security, all but a sliver has been devoted to air travel (even so, most air cargo remains unscreened for bombs). DHS Secretary Tom Ridge lamely announced plans for rapid-deployment dogs at train stations, also a “pilot program” to test the feasibility of screening all rail passengers and their luggage.

Vigilant Democrats jumped him anyway. Bush’s new budget provides a measly \$34 million increase for rail security, they complained. They propose an immediate \$1.2 billion for stepped-up surveillance of tracks, tunnels, bridges, stations—more guards, cameras, dogs. Doesn’t the White House know Penn Station handles more passengers than New York’s airports? Or that a rail tunnel runs under the Supreme Court and the Capitol grounds?

Actually, in terms of worldwide terrorist attacks, the most popular target is buses (ask the Israelis). Can one imagine bus passengers pausing to have their shopping bags X-rayed? Or the 8 million daily riders on New York’s subways? DFI International, a consulting firm, reported “a concern that increased spending on

Amtrak will shift the threat to local commuter rails and subways, or even to bus systems,” and said it would take tens of billions to “introduce...the same level of security found at airports.”

The eager politics of tightening antiterrorist security perversely pushes the risk from one venue to another, from one set of potential victims to others just as innocent. Whatever the actual “threat level” may be, the act of building an electronic Fortress America, wired to prevent terrorists from blowing up Americans, is a physical impossibility. Think of waterborne commerce—300 ports, 1,000 harbor channels, 3,700 passenger and cargo terminals and 7 million cargo containers—all linked to industrial America’s factories and refineries, even nuclear power plants, where dangerous materials are always present. High-tech designers are at work on spy-in-the-sky solutions; lobbyists are pushing for the money.

There is, in fact, a lot of stuff you could blow up in this country. And occasionally some does blow up, without any help from terrorist cells. We live with these industrial risks every day. Some of them could be reduced and maybe should be. It costs money. But when an oil refinery explodes and kills some workers or a freight train derailed, dousing a community with carcinogenic chemicals, nobody in politics proposes that we “go to war.”

Wasting money on faddish concerns is not the worst outcome. I would go further and assert that the “war on terrorism” itself will produce random injury and death—inadvertently, of course—because the spending will deform and undermine the country’s other priorities. The public health system, for example, has long been starved of adequate funding, but its role is being pushed aside by the exotic dangers of bioterrorism [see Katherine Eban, “Waiting for Bioterror,” December 9, 2002]. Anthrax is sexier than maternal and child healthcare, immunization, identifying industrial contaminants and disease control. Some children will doubtless pay with their lives for this shift in priorities.

Since 9/11, scaremongers in high places have thrilled the populace with lurid tales of how dread diseases or chemical toxins might be weapons of choice for the Islamic terrorists’ next great attack (though the only bioterrorism to date—the anthrax letters to Congress—was a domestic crime, and the culprit remains unknown). Nonetheless, Democrats proposed an expensive plan, and Bush stole their idea. Bioshield is a \$6 billion invitation to the drug industry and biotech research companies to invent magic bullets—new vaccines to inoculate Americans against rare germs and poisons, new cures to heal victims and monitoring machines to detect a whiff of anthrax or sarin before anyone dies.

“I think Bioshield is all about diverting research money to the private sector,” said Dr. Tee Guidotti, chair of environmental and occupational health at George Washington University. “This additional mission has been grafted onto the infrastructure of the public health system, which has been in decline for years, yet lacks the resources needed for rebuilding.” Public health priorities are thus determined not by how many people are at risk but by how rare the poisons are that might kill Americans, and which fiendish actors wish to kill them. “The potential investment for Bioshield is limited only by science fiction,” Guidotti said. He expects Bioshield to generate its own nightmares, because any surveillance system sensitive enough to detect a contaminant as rare as anthrax typically reports many more false alarms than real warnings. W.G.

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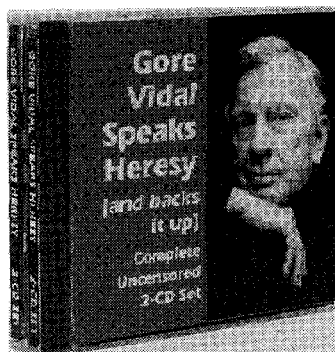
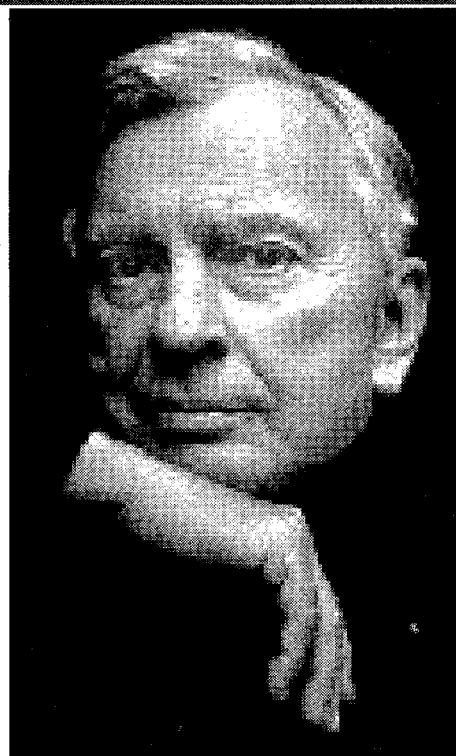
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The only way out of this fog of pretension is painful self-examination by Americans—cutting our fears down to more plausible terms and facing the complicated realities of our role in the world. The spirited opposition that arose to Bush's war in Iraq is a good starting place, because citizens raised real questions that were brushed aside. I don't think most Americans are interested in imperial rule, but they were grossly misled by patriotic rhetoric. Now is the time for sober, serious teach-ins

that lay out the real history of US power in the world, and that also explain the positive and progressive future that is possible. Once citizens have constructed a clear-eyed, dissenting version of our situation, perhaps politicians can also be liberated from exaggerated fear. The self-imposed destruction that has flowed from Bush's logic cannot be stopped until a new cast of leaders steps forward to guide the country. This transformation begins by changing Presidents. ■

THE U.S. POLICIES OF ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION AND MILITARIZATION ARE FAILING.

Bolivia's Indian Revolt

TOM HAYDEN

Bolivia, the poorest country in South America, is the center of a three-year-old indigenous insurrection that has twice routed multinational corporations and nearly achieved the rarest of political successes, election of an openly Indian president in the Americas.

The cause of native people today is widely considered "lost" to genocide or assimilation, except perhaps as a spiritual legacy, an exotic consumer market and isolated moments of resistance. This common understanding not only ignores the phenomenon of tribal people from Iraq to South Asia who are still resisting but is blind to the "mountain chain of indigenous uprisings in reaction to US neoliberalism in Latin America, the most radical thing that has appeared in thirty years," as described to me by the respected Bolivian intellectual Alvaro Garcia Linera.

What began with the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas in 1994 has surfaced in Ecuador, Guatemala and especially Bolivia, where, Garcia says, almost one-fifth of the population, or 1.5 million Indians, live in autonomous communities where official government structures have virtually faded away. "There is no other country where leaders of the left and the anticorporate movements are Indian," Garcia, a former guerrilla and political prisoner, notes. "The Indians here have always been carriers of water but never in charge of social movements." They are not attempting to turn back the historical clock but are becoming "postmodern" and "postnational" bearers of an alternative narrative of the country. Bolivia is now the focal point, he believes, because of its large indigenous majority and the prospect that "the option for exercising power has become real."

The first of these postmodern revolutionaries I interviewed during a May visit to Bolivia's highlands was wearing a bright-yellow sweatshirt with a GUESS USA logo. Thirty-year-old Néstor Guillén Daza Mayta described how Bolivian soldiers stormed into his tiny barrio last October 12, the same date as Columbus's arrival in the indigenous world 511 years before.



Néstor's barrio, Villa Ingenio, is the coldest and poorest neighborhood in El Alto, a ramshackle city of more than 1 million Aymara and Quechua people who migrated during the past two decades from Bolivia's altiplano, making El Alto the largest, most Indian city in Latin America.

Last year El Alto residents rose against a government plan that allowed foreign investors to exploit Bolivia's natural gas for Mexican and Southern California energy markets. While energy-hungry California consumers were being "gamed" by one of the pipeline sponsors, Sempra Energy (which made \$518 million during the state's 2001 energy crisis), Néstor's people in Villa Ingenio were freezing at 13,000 feet without gas hookups. They joined a nationwide protest of Indians, workers and campesinos against the gas giveaway, against neoliberalism and against President "Goni" (Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada), the white mining executive and University of Chicago-trained free-market economist who had been privatizing the Bolivian economy since the mid-1980s. "Our economy was dead, there was no formal work and we were sick of it," Néstor remembers.

In his GUESS shirt, Néstor hardly appeared to be a militant subversive, but more like the young researcher that he is, meticulously saving clippings on the country's oil and gas reserves ("second to Venezuela in Latin America," he says proudly). But in October 2003, he was in the streets resisting the soldiers when they came through the small, sun-filled churchyard where our interview took place, killing twenty-six people in a three-hour spree. In that September–October uprising, sixty-five people were killed and hundreds wounded, bringing last year's cumulative death toll of indigenous protesters to 110; over a fourteen-month period, the total killed was more than during seven years of Hugo Banzer's military dictatorship of the 1970s.

As last year's Indian uprising and military repression intensified, La Paz's frightened white middle class finally opted for reform, forming a human chain of "hands for peace" that spanned the length of the Avenida Ballivian, which traverses La Paz. So broad was the outrage that an American-born social-science researcher, Tom Kruse, found himself arm in arm with a World Bank economist. While some Bolivian radicals felt that the

Tom Hayden is the author of The Zapatista Reader (Nation Books) and Street Wars (New Press).

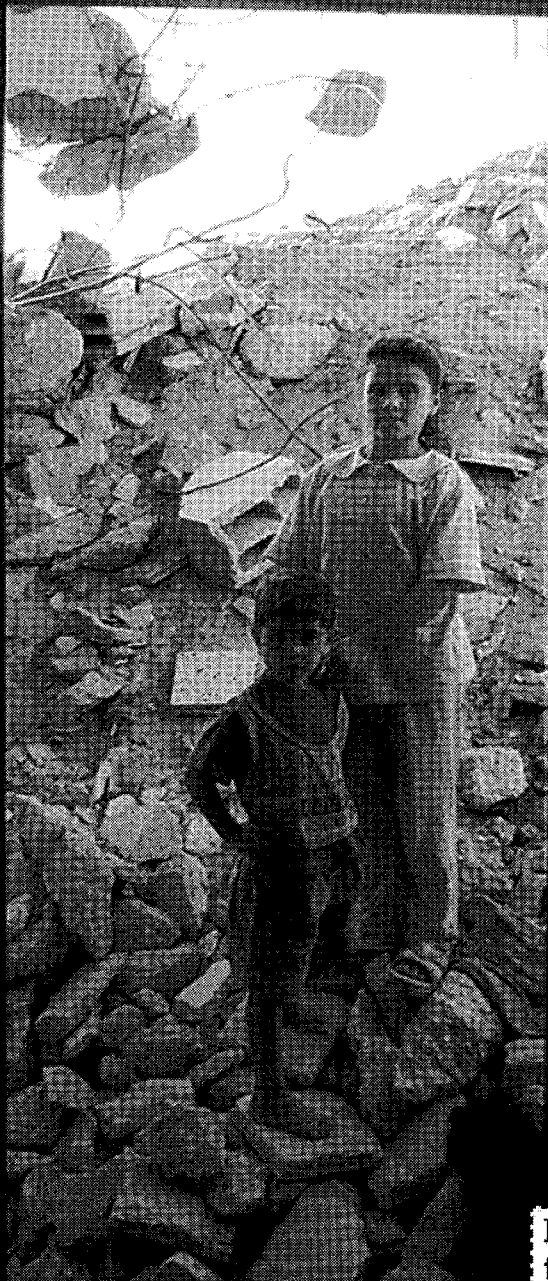


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middle-class intervention forced a moderation of their struggle, it also convinced the Goni government to give up.

On October 17, five days after the massacre in Villa Ingenio, Goni fled to Miami, where, through intermediaries, he sought a safe haven at Harvard's Institute of Politics, where I happened to be teaching a study group on globalization and social movements. Harvard rejected Goni's application, at least temporarily, after one insider noted that "the guy just killed a hundred people."

The American Embassy in La Paz was stunned by Goni's overthrow. Officials there had no Plan B. Not only was the architect of Bolivia's privatization gone, but so too was the \$7 billion World Bank-backed natural gas project. "Let's just say, because of nationalist fervor," a Semptra consultant told me, "that the project is, well, not dead, but on hold." With breezy confidence, he added that Semptra was still "inking deals" in Australia and Indonesia.

Bolivia has suffered from resource plunder since colonial times, starting with silver and tin. The 2003 "gas war" was preceded by a 2002 "water war" against the Bechtel Corporation's privatization of water in Cochabamba, Bolivia's third-largest city and home of Quechua-speaking campesinos. When Bechtel's subsidiary announced rate increases beyond what people could afford, continuous street demonstrations forced the company's retreat.

More frightening for US officials and the tiny Bolivian upper class in 2002 was the presidential campaign of Senator Evo Morales, a Quechua-speaking socialist leader of the Union de Cocaleros, the major target of the US drug-eradication program in the Andes. Morales, a handsome 44-year-old based in the Chaparé region, where the drug wars still rage, finished just one point behind Goni, riding a nationalist wave that rose every time a US Embassy official lectured Bolivians on the "consequences" of voting for Morales. His party, a loose coalition called the Movement Toward Socialism, surprised even itself by earning eight senate and twenty-seven congressional seats, up from only four a few years before. If the presidential runoff hadn't been decided by the conservative legislature, rather than by popular vote, Morales would most likely be president today. With the exception of Mexico's Benito Juárez in the mid-nineteenth century, it is difficult to recall an elected indigenous-identified president in the Americas over the past two centuries.

The US military is sounding the alarm. In Congressional testimony this March, Gen. James Hill, head of the US Southern Command, warned that "if radicals continue to hijack the indigenous movement, we could find ourselves faced with a narco-state that supports the uncontrolled cultivation of coca." While media and political attention is being focused on Iraq, the Southern Command is rapidly establishing a major military base of operations in Colombia that extends across the region. In the hyper-rhetoric of Bolivian conservatives, Morales is "the bin Laden of the Andes."

But the October 2003 uprising in El Alto was launched by people like Néstor, not elected leaders like Morales. In fact, Morales has been playing a pragmatic role by thus far supporting President Carlos Mesa (the former vice president, who took

over after Goni fled) on the oil and gas legislation. When I interviewed Morales in his bustling La Paz office, he spoke of the need for a "new bilateral relationship" with the United States, and he offered to travel to Washington for discussions if provided with a visa. While he must defend his *cocolero* base, there is no doubt that he seeks to reach some accommodation with the United States, not promote a suicidal "narco-state."

The US policies of economic globalization and militarization are both failing and deepening in Bolivia. Since 1996 military assistance as a percentage of total US aid to Bolivia has risen from 17 percent to 40.4 percent. Al Gore once proclaimed, referring to Bolivia's privatization plans, that "the entire world is marching on the Bolivian road," but Goni is now in Miami and ten years of forced-interdiction policies against coca have failed to produce a viable alternative. Regardless, US trade officials are still pushing a NAFTA-like Andean Free Trade Agreement, which would impose sanctions against any Bolivian regulatory, tax or natural-resource actions that conflict with multinational investment interests.

When Goni flew off to Miami last October, Mesa, a former journalist, stepped gingerly into the power vacuum, pleading for Indian consent. Mesa stood on a platform in El Alto with Felipe Quispe, considered the most militant of Aymaran nationalists, while thousands of Indians came to look him over, including Néstor's delegation. Mesa has made three extraordinary promises in exchange for an interlude of peace: first, to revise Bolivia's current oil and gas law to at least triple Bolivia's revenues, if not nationalize the industry; second, to assure a national referendum on new oil and gas proposals; and third, to permit a constituent assembly within one year to rewrite Bolivia's Constitution. The promises brought breathing space for staggered government functionaries and the panicked upper class, while at the same time raising Indian expectations higher than anyone could remember.

Today, however, eight months have passed and the gas still isn't hooked up in Néstor's barrio. Reform of the oil and gas law has been mired under threats of litigation. The July 18 referendum is only a few weeks away, and the constituent assembly has become problematic to the political establishment, the US Embassy and investors worried about greater democratization. But popular expectations remain high; for example, indigenous and women's groups are holding grassroots meetings on the Constitution, hoping to write themselves into history for the first time.

A frustrated US official warned: "There could be a complete meltdown here. It could get worse, you know. The poor can be even poorer," implying that chaos and disinvestment might lie ahead. If so, the Bush Administration isn't helping. The United States spends over thirty times more a month in Iraq than it plans to channel to Bolivia this entire year. The US budget for 2004 cuts food aid by nearly half and "child survival and health" funds by 15 percent. Bolivia's current foreign debt is \$5 billion, and its internal debt is more than \$2 billion. "You just can't develop your way out from under such a debt," says researcher Kruse.

"It's all hanging by a thread," says Néstor. "People are still

Aymaran nationalist Felipe Quispe talks of a war 'against gringo neoliberalism and racism, and to change our government to an Indian one.'

mobilizing, talking about strikes, and if the government still makes fun of us there will be another October." It's not up to radical politicians like Morales or revolutionary nationalists like Quispe, he says. While they may be important symbols in the media, their leadership capacity is shaped by Indian assemblies with a strong emphasis on communal participation.

If the government presence in El Alto is shaky, an hour's drive into the countryside beyond El Alto envelops one in "kind of an Indian liberated zone," says *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Hector Tobar. Remote Indian communities like Achacachi, Warisata, Sorata and Huarina, which ring the vast rim of Lake Titicaca, are at the center of creation for both Aymara and Inca cultures, and a source of deep foreboding in white psyches. When we considered a visit to Achacachi, our guide, a good-hearted, blue-eyed blond American who has lived in Bolivia for a decade, joked nervously about "being eaten" there. She was not alone; the *Rough Guide to Bolivia* advises that "though the lurid tales you may hear of anthropophagous Aymaras should be ignored, this is not a place to linger long if you're an outsider." We drove to Achacachi anyway. Together with several tiny outlying hamlets, the town has several thousand inhabitants, who tend sheep and grow potatoes, quinoa and other grains. We entered the small central square with an Aymaran driver, parked and introduced ourselves to the mayor, Francisco Quispe Ramirez, who seemed friendly and eager to tell the town's story. While everyone in town seemed quietly aware of our presence, I felt not the slightest tension. It seemed clear who was in control, and it was not the gringos.

We sat in the mayor's office overlooking a square where about 200 young people, faces painted, were boisterously enjoying a school celebration. Quispe Ramirez, a campesino in a blue and green striped shirt, proudly acknowledged that "we are known as a fierce people, warriors. Because we face extreme poverty, we still use oxen in the fields and hand hoes." A main demand of the town, he said, is for direct marketing access in La Paz, so that revenues can be invested in Achacachi's schools.

Quispe Ramirez was elected in 1999 as a leader in the campesino union and "a revolutionary man," as he put it. One year later the Indian rebellion started across the altiplano. In Achacachi, the activists blocked the road to La Paz and skirmished with the military, which killed one campesino in April. "That did it," Quispe Ramirez said, waving his arms to dramatize the local rage. Townspeople grabbed an army captain, whom they blamed for the shooting and "didn't kill him but beat him up" before he was rescued and hospitalized. Still furious, the Indians burned government offices in the town and dumped official files all over the square, then marched to the local jail to free the inmates. Next they burned the beds and television in the police station. Still raging, they marched to the hospital. As the mayor explained, "It was unfortunate that the military didn't take [the captain] back to the base. So the people killed him."

Despite the death and destruction, Quispe Ramirez feels the uprising has accomplished something positive. "Look at the 2002 elections—white people began to respect people with [common Aymaran] names like Quispe, Mamani and Huanca," he said. "We have senators who are Aymara. Felipe [Quispe] became a leader because of the movement here. And we are teaching our children to occupy the space that is ours, to create our own government

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inspired by the vision of Tupac Katari”—the warrior chief who led a siege of La Paz in the eighteenth century.

During the same week we were in Achacachi, the Aymara killed another public official, in Ilave, on the Peruvian side of Lake Titicaca, in response to the murder of an indigenous leader there. Nervous Peruvian newspapers reported “sightings” of Quispe in Ilave, which was claimed by villagers as “the capital of the Aymara Republic.”

I interviewed Quispe (known as “El Malku,” the condor) in his La Paz office, sitting under a poster of Tupac Katari. The dark corridors were filled with hunger-striking students, while at the front entrance a woman hung in a crucified position protesting educational cuts. Quispe is a lifelong radical organizer, a former guerrilla and an outspoken advocate of an Aymaran Republic. While Quispe is the devil himself to middle-class *pacenos*, he seems more like Malcolm X in his deliberate choice of inflammatory words. For example, he casually told us that the “whites are here as renters on our land, and we need to put a giant fence around them, a reservation, a safe place for white people to be.” Quispe is the Aymaran ghost that haunts the present. “We lost in the colonial era, but it was not a complete loss, because we still exist thanks to our warrior ancestors,” he said. In the subsequent era of the Bolivian republic, “we also lost because we didn’t create our own nation.” But since 2000, there has emerged a third war, he says, “against gringo neoliberalism and racism, and to change our government to an Indian one.”

In the perspective of Alvaro Garcia, the Bolivian intellectual, there are both moderate and radical tendencies, sometimes converging, sometimes not, in the current insurrection. The radicals like Felipe Quispe, he said, have a strong argument for communitarian Indian nationalism, but their rural experience leaves them without a concrete urban economic policy. The more moderate

Evo Morales represents both a broader social base, in Garcia’s view, and a program that would retain the Bolivian state and the neoliberal model but with “an Indian face” and progressive economic reforms.

Garcia, who once shared a guerrilla experience with Quispe, believes Bolivia is closer today to a political revolution than a social and economic one. At the two extremes are possibilities of a full Indian insurrection or a US-backed coup, he says, but there could also be “radical reform” of the system, through electoral means such as the Mesa transition plan, the July 18 referendum on gas and oil, and reconfiguration of the state through the constituent assembly. Or, he added, there could be a sudden “rupture of *el modelo*” if the gas crisis goes unresolved, bringing all the social movements together to replace the failed government with one led by indigenous people.

I asked a US Embassy contact just before I left for a “threat assessment” of Bolivia, and whether he believed it was possible to hook up Néstor’s gas. Back in October, gas was certainly the unifying theme, along with all the deaths, said the spokesman. But the Indians have lost a unifying theme at the moment, he claimed, and the new president is popular. Meanwhile, he admitted, US officials are working urgently to peel away parts of Evo Morales’s base, and keeping the insurgents from “bubbling up” in El Alto is a top priority. “If El Alto joins in again, there is the potential to overthrow the government,” he said.

As for Néstor’s gas being hooked up, the official seemed surprised at the failure, then threw up his hands. “These Bolivians just don’t do the basics, just don’t pay attention.” When I asked how the gas might be made available to Villa Ingenio, he launched into the need for a study committee, the cost of distribution networks, the problems for rate of return, etc. As I closed my notepad, I remembered that natural gas is an invisible substance that, if improperly handled, explodes with a sudden fury. ■

LETTERS

C O N T I N U E D

(Continued From Page 2)

Other countries, like Spain, that have been victimized by Al Qaeda bombings are able to use their criminal law against other “sleepers cells”; there is no reason to resort to the techniques of a dictatorship.

Finally, the Administration’s claims that our nation is at war; that there are enemy aliens subject to indefinite detention on the President’s unilateral determination; and that we need extraordinary arrests and detentions are all political, not legal, claims. Because they implicate so deeply the question of how democratic our society will be, we must not allow this Supreme Court to have the controlling word on these most basic issues.

DAVID TYKULSKER

COLE REPLIES

Washington, DC

The claim that prompted David Tykulska’s (and other readers’) objections was that the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was wrong in holding that the President lacks any authority

to detain as a military matter an admitted Al Qaeda member who comes here to attack us. In my view (a view shared by the UN, NATO, almost everyone in Congress and most other nations), the attack Al Qaeda perpetrated on September 11, 2001, authorized a military response. Whether one views it as good policy or not, the notion that one can respond militarily to an attack of that magnitude is not controversial.

Inherent in a military response, and reflected in the Geneva Conventions, is the authority to detain those fighting for the other side, for the duration of the conflict. In World War II, we were not reduced to having to charge and try everyone we captured fighting for Nazi Germany or Japan, nor should we be so constrained when it comes to those fighting for Al Qaeda.

The real problem with the President’s assertion of “enemy combatant” authority, then, is procedural, not substantive—it is the refusal to provide any hearing whatsoever to distinguish between those actually fighting for Al Qaeda

against us and those who are not, and the adamant opposition to any meaningful oversight or review by the courts.

DAVID COLE

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS?

Beverly Hills, Calif.

■ Only a True Believer could send a Christian Army of 150,000 into the midst of tens of millions of Muslims expecting to change their politics, their economy, their culture and their way of life [William Greider, “Iraq as Vietnam,” May 3]. And all this by June 30. Throughout the centuries it has been tried many times; the Peasants’ Crusade, the Hermits’ Crusade, the Children’s Crusade. They all failed. History, I believe, will refer to this one as the Idiot’s Crusade.

CHARLES BRAGG

CORRECTION

■ In Eric Alterman’s “Stop the Presses” for May 10, “The Man” is the term Dick Cheney uses to refer to George W. Bush, not the term used by other officials to refer to Cheney.

COMMENT

(Continued From Page 8)

Europe were in fact prevented because the United States tipped off the governments in question (France and Portugal) in advance." Closing his reply, Maxwell upped the ante: "Some countries," he wrote, "have established 'truth commissions' to look into such matters. In the United States, however, the record has been extracted painfully, like rotten teeth."

Rogers returned to the battlefield with a second letter in the March/April issue, in which he accused Maxwell of "bias," dismissed the notion that Letelier's murder could have been prevented and denied that he bore any responsibility for the crimes committed under Condor. Rogers's tone suggested that Maxwell had crossed an invisible line: "One would hope at least," Rogers ominously concluded, "that Maxwell's views are understood to be his own and not those of the Council on Foreign Relations, where he is a senior fellow."

On February 4, Maxwell had handed in a six-paragraph rebuttal to Rogers's second letter—in which he wrote, "Rogers cannot forever provide a shield for his boss to hide behind"—but it never appeared. High-ranking sources at the council say that Kissinger and Rogers applied enormous pressure, directly and indirectly, on *Foreign Affairs* editor James Hoge—and on the council itself—to close off the debate. Neither Rogers nor Kissinger is a stranger to the institution: Rogers served three terms on its board of directors; Kissinger has been affiliated off and on since 1955, and he currently co-chairs a task force on US policy toward Europe. Maxwell notes that the institution's new president, Richard Haass, who succeeded Leslie Gelb in 2003, "is very much anxious to engage him." Maxwell declines to elaborate on the specific ways Kissinger and Rogers exerted their influence, but he does allow that "they know how to act in these matters, and they bring heavy guns to bear."

When his internal lobbying to get his rebuttal published failed, Maxwell felt compelled to act. On May 13 he resigned from the council and from his post as book reviewer for *Foreign Affairs*. The resignation was instantly accepted by Haass. In his resignation letter to Hoge, Maxwell wrote, "I have no personal ax to grind in this matter, but I do have a historian's obligation to the accuracy of the historical record. The Council's current relationship with Mr. Kissinger evidently comes at the cost of suppressing debate about his actions as a public figure. This I want no part of."

Hoge denies receiving pressure from Kissinger. "I never talked to Henry Kissinger about this at all," he says, "nor has anybody else told me that Henry had a view one way or the other." But Hoge certainly felt the sting of Rogers's fury. After round one of the exchange, Hoge received a call from Rogers, who recoiled from Maxwell's suggestion that he was directly (or indirectly) complicitous in Operation Condor. Hoge urged Rogers to send a second letter, and—curiously—assured him that the letter would conclude the exchange. Hoge then contacted Maxwell. "I called Ken," Hoge recalls, "and said, 'This is what Rogers thinks you are implying.' And he said, 'That is what I'm implying.' And I said, 'Ken, that puts me in an awkward position, because it's informed surmise that you are basing this on, frankly. If there are hard facts to this, they have yet to come out.'" Evidently Hoge does not read the books reviewed in his own journal, because as Maxwell pointed out in the

unpublished reply, "Washington's knowledge about the Condor system and its activities during this period has been cautiously and carefully documented in John Dinges's book *The Condor Years*, especially chapters 7–10, and in chapter 6 of Kornbluh's *Pinochet File*." Hoge declined to explain why he promised Rogers—and not Maxwell, his journal's own Latin America expert—the last word in the exchange. "A different call might have been made," Hoge admits. (Kissinger and Rogers did not return phone calls, and Haass was traveling and unavailable for comment.)

Leaving the council, and vacating an endowed chair, was not an easy decision for Maxwell, a soft-spoken, English-born, 63-year-old historian who has taught at Yale, Princeton and Columbia and

Passings

The old left lost a stalwart and *The Nation* a friend when William Reuben died recently at age 89. Reuben, whose books include *The Atom Spy Hoax* and *The Honorable Mr. Nixon and the Alger Hiss Case*, made his reputation as an investigative reporter for the *National Guardian*. He was a walking encyclopedia on the Rosenberg and Hiss cases, raising loud challenges on behalf of the defendants, whom he regarded as wrongly convicted. Before he died he completed, with the help of his friend and editor Zack Sklar, a manuscript about the Hiss case, on which he had worked off and on for almost half a century. He wrote a monograph for the Nation Institute, "Footnote on an Historic Case: In Re Alger Hiss," exposing more than 100 factual errors in the denial of Hiss's petition to reopen his case. When not defending underdogs, Reuben could be found at the racetrack, where he frequently played the favorite.

In the recent hoopla about the "greatest generation," David Dellinger, who died on May 25, at 88, did not get his proper due. True, he was a pacifist, not an old soldier, opposed to the draft in World War II. But even a "good war" needs someone to stand up and remind us that no war is good. His refusal to register got Dellinger four years' hard prison time instead of a medal. He fought as fearlessly for all his beliefs, from racial equality to nuclear disarmament, and edited several small progressive journals. He helped found *7 Days*, an ambitious newsweekly for the left whose readers *The Nation* inherited after it failed. He was the author of six books, including *From Yale to Jail: The Life Story of a Moral Dissenter* (1993).

We note also the deaths of Sam Dash, the incorruptible chief counsel of the Senate Watergate committee, and Archibald Cox, special prosecutor in the same affair, whose relentless pursuit of the truth drove him to a head-on crash with the Nixon White House. Rather than desist, he resigned on principle.

who writes for *The New York Review of Books*. "The burden was on me to make a decision on an issue of principle," he says. "That's never easy. It's easier to acquiesce. But in this case I didn't feel like acquiescing." On July 1 he will become a senior fellow at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard.

Oddly enough, Maxwell's departure coincides with the release of a 20,000-page cache of Henry Kissinger's telephone conversations from the 1970s, some of which concern Chile. "We didn't do it," Kissinger informed President Nixon after President Allende was overthrown by General Pinochet. "I mean we helped them." In light of these new transcripts, Maxwell's call for an American "truth commission" on Chile seems more appropriate than ever. But don't expect to find the details in the pages of *Foreign Affairs*.

SCOTT SHERMAN

Scott Sherman is a contributing writer at The Nation.

Dealing the Drug Cards

This month, some 40 million people on Medicare can start using discount cards touted by the Bush Administration as a major initiative to help seniors save money on their prescriptions. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson has said these cards will provide "real savings for many seniors." He's right—up to a point. An actuarial study by Consumers Union's Center for Consumer Health Choices and the California HealthCare Foundation shows that for people who take a lot of medicines, the savings can be significant. For example, someone taking eight medications for such ailments as heart disease, high cholesterol, arthritis and diabetes will pay about \$1,200 a year less with a card that gives good discounts than he or she would pay for the same prescriptions using the discounted rate that the State of California pays when it buys drugs for residents on Medi-Cal, the state's Medicaid program.

But in the long run, discount cards are not good for seniors; they are simply a Band-Aid covering a deeper problem: the rising cost of healthcare, in particular prescription drugs.

Just on their own merits, the cards have problems. For one thing, finding good discounts takes a lot of work on the part of consumers who don't have actuaries running the numbers, and whether those discounts will last is anyone's guess. Card sponsors can change their prices weekly in response to market conditions and competition. But once consumers buy a card, they can't switch to do the same; they're locked in until the end of the year.

More important, the cards are the first step on the path to privatizing the government's forty-year commitment to helping seniors pay for healthcare through the Medicare program. Anyone

over 65 is entitled to health insurance benefits, and through the years Medicare has shielded millions from poverty. But conservatives and their Republican allies would like to eliminate Medicare and turn healthcare for seniors over to private companies. This would practically guarantee that private insurance companies would make millions while shifting the burden of rising medical costs to seniors themselves.

The drug cards provide the pilot program for how it will be done. The Medicare reform law passed this past fall, which authorized the discount cards, also provides for a new, more elaborate drug benefit starting in 2006. But to be eligible for it, seniors must sign up with a private insurer. That's why so many companies are racing to offer the cards; a substantial base of cardholders will give them a ready market for the new drug benefit two years from now. The expectation is that the government will eventually force all seniors to choose a private insurer for all their medical care, just as it is doing with the cards.

The discount program does not address the twin problems plaguing the drug market: Americans pay the highest drug prices in the world, and annual spending for pharmaceuticals, now some \$250 billion, has been doubling every five years. In late May, the AARP, whose support was instrumental in passing the new law, noted that prices for the most commonly prescribed brand-name drugs for seniors have risen at least three times faster than inflation in the past four years. So even if a person gets a good discount today, that savings will evaporate as drug-makers continue to raise prices.

Ironically—when seniors have trouble figuring out which card to buy and come to realize they may be stuck with a plan that doesn't provide much relief over time—the cards may help build support for real reform. Seniors still flock to Canada, where drugs are cheaper than even those bought with good discount cards. The limitations of the card will also help the effort to legalize drugs from Canada, which lays the groundwork for government involvement in negotiating drug prices. The House has passed a bill legalizing drug importation from Canada, and the Senate is expected to do the same by July 4. "Americans have seen Canadians pay much less and no longer accept high drug prices as natural and inevitable," says Alan Sager, a drug industry expert at Boston University's School of Public Health.

Drug-makers are getting worried. Through new advertising campaigns, some are trying to reinforce their message that high prices are necessary to finance research for new cures. Several, including Eli Lilly, Glaxo SmithKline and Pfizer, are supplying just enough drugs for only the Canadian market, in effect cutting off extra supplies that Americans can buy. "Importation is a form of price control," says Glaxo spokesperson Nancy Pekarek.

Discount cards and the new drug benefit are the last stand for private solutions to rising drug prices. In the end, only federal involvement in negotiating or regulating cheaper prices for drugs will allow seniors—and all Americans—to have the medicines they deserve at a cost the country can afford. TRUDY LIEBERMAN

ON THE WEB: John Nichols reports on Stephanie Herseth's big Congressional win in South Dakota and Marc Cooper exults that former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet is "right back where he belongs—a hairsbreadth away from trial," at www.thenation.com.

Trudy Lieberman, who writes about healthcare for The Nation, is the director of the Center for Consumer Health Choices at Consumers Union. This article represents her views, not those of Consumers Union.

BOOKS & THE ARTS

The Irresistible Rise of Berlusconi

FREDERIKA RANDALL

SILVIO BERLUSCONI: Television, Power and Patrimony.

By Paul Ginsborg. Verso. 189 pp. \$25.

Dressed up as a tropical dictator in a sketch by the great Italian political cartoonist Altan, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi wears a double-breasted camouflage jacket, a goony grin on his face and a large banana slung over his hip like a machete. "I was democratically elected," Berlusconi is sighing.

"But I deserved much, much better."

The perception that Italy's premier TV tycoon has brought the country to the brink of banana democracy—as the Italian daily *La Repubblica* calls it—is one that torments many in Italy these days. When a prime minister is on trial for criminal charges as serious as corrupting judges; when, with utter disregard for any conflict of interest standards, he maintains control of all but one of the country's national TV channels and a sizable piece of its publishing industry while holding office; when virtually the only laws he passes are *ad personam* measures that promote his own business and legal interests; when he noisily attacks the judiciary and journalists who dare to criticize him; when he makes grievous faux pas in foreign policy—when Berlusconi does all these things and more, one naturally begins to worry about the state of Italian democracy. As Primo Levi warned, "Every age has its Fascism," not necessarily accompanied by "terror and police intimidation." Democracy, Levi pointed out, can be undermined by "withholding or manipulating information, polluting the judicial system and paralyzing the school system, by encouraging in many subtle ways nostalgia for a world in which order reigns supreme."

Fortunately, basic freedom of speech is still intact in Italy, where scores of writers have focused their sights on Berlusconi and his excesses. A search of an Italian Internet bookseller turned up seventy-six titles that included the name Berlusconi (and by no means do all books on the subject have his

name in the title), all but a handful of them critical of the Prime Minister. The list of authors includes an impressive number of Italy's leading intellectuals, right down to Nobel laureate Dario Fo, who with Franca Rame has written and performed a withering, surrealist theater piece about the prime minister, *L'Anomalo bicefalo* ("the two-headed anomaly"). It is just one of four extravagant works of fiction devoted to the Berlusconi phenomenon, alongside more straitlaced analyses by jurists, economists and political scientists.

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is remaking Italy's political system in the image of his media empire. Is Italian democracy at risk?

It's been ten years since Berlusconi threw his hat into the political arena, or "stepped onto the field," as he is fond of saying in one of his cherished sports metaphors. His first government, which came to power in 1994, lasted just seven months; in 2001 he was re-elected. A decade ago, when Berlusconi was founding the Forza Italia party, veteran Italian journalist Enzo Biagi asked him why he was running for office. To protect himself, Berlusconi said, because "they want me to go bankrupt and end up in jail." He had plenty of reason to be concerned: His company Fininvest was in grave debt, the courts in Milan and Palermo had opened investigations of him and his associates on grounds of corruption and Mafia association, and his political protectors had been swept away in the huge Tangentopoli ("Bribesville") corruption scandals.

Ten years later Berlusconi's finances are thriving (this year *Forbes* reported him the

Frederika Randall, a journalist and translator based in Rome, has written on Italy for the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times.

thirtieth-richest man in the world, worth \$10 billion). The criminal charges against him still drag through the courts, stymied by a law he passed to give himself immunity from prosecution (subsequently struck down by the Constitutional Court) and the delaying tactics of the ninety-eight lawyers he has deployed to defend himself against the various accusations.

Conflict of interest is too decorous a term to describe the problem that arises when the near-monopoly owner of Italy's commercial TV industry becomes prime minister without giving up ownership or control of his private empire. Naked self-interest is more like it. In the years since he entered politics, the Berlusconi share of TV advertising revenues has risen dramatically, sending billions into the coffers of his advertising company Publitalia. A recent law he passed allows him to continue broadcasting on his three national commercial channels—the Constitutional Court ruled that the limit for any one owner should be two only—and will thus preserve hundreds of millions of dollars in ad revenues this year.

As a candidate Berlusconi used his advertising sales reps in Publitalia as his campaign foot soldiers (an astonishing fifty of them were elected members of Parliament in 1994). Not only did he have unlimited access to favorable TV coverage but, more subtly, he was able to project as political promise the same aura of game-show good humor and consumer opulence that his TV channels project. As prime minister, Berlusconi has exercised tight control over RAI-TV, the public broadcaster, while continuing to dictate the political slant of his commercial channels—so that six of seven national channels are Berlusconi-controlled. (Those seventy-odd books criticizing him reach a tiny audience, compared with that of all the TV watchers.)

One of Berlusconi's first acts in office was to publicly denounce a comedian he deemed unfriendly and two RAI journalists—among them the avuncular Enzo Biagi—and suggest they should be unceremoniously fired, which they were. The Prime Minister's cavalier and arrogant misuse of office arises all the time in ways that would be comical if they were not tragic, as when he hogs hours of exclusive coverage on RAI's leading public-affairs show, or when he recently called in to a Sunday RAI-TV sports program and monopolized the line for twenty minutes expounding on the tactics of his soccer team, AC Milan.

Shame that Italy has sunk so low is a leitmotif of the current crop of books on Berlusconi (not unlike the wave of new books on George W. Bush). The economist Paolo Sylos Labini says he wrote *Berlusconi e gli anticorpi* ("Berlusconi and the Antibodies") so that he could look at himself in his shaving mirror in the morning, and "to show that Berlusconi is not Italy." Sylos Labini stops short of saying that Italy lacks the democratic "antibodies"—freedom of the press, the rule of law—that protect against authoritarian misrule, but he shows they are under attack. Like other critics he's quick to point out that Berlusconi's illiberal rule has little in com-

While Berlusconi might not be a fascist, his charm is lodged in an obsessive personality cult not seen since the age of Mussolini.

mon with Fascism. Still, tormented comparisons to Mussolini are forever creeping into the pages of these books.

Piccolo Cesare ("Little Caesar"), the distinguished muckraker Giorgio Bocca titles his howl of outrage about Berlusconi. If the Prime Minister's swaggering ways sometimes remind him of *Il Duce*, says Bocca, "this is not Fascism—although history repeats itself first as tragedy, then as farce." At times, writes Bocca, "it seems as if someone had opened the gates of our cities to aliens, aliens who don't hide their greed and their vulgarity." It's a sentiment shared by legal scholar Franco Cordero, who writes in *Le strane regole del Signor B* ("The Strange Rules of Mr. B") of a "barbarian invasion" and likens the Prime Minister's famously charismatic style to that of an old-time shoe-polish salesman giving a wild pitch for his wares in the market.

Il venditore ("The Salesman") is in fact the title of a 1995 biography of Berlusconi by Giuseppe Fiori, the author of the well-known biography of Antonio Gramsci, the renowned Italian Communist who died in one of Mussolini's jails. Although somewhat out of date, *Il venditore* remains the best background source on Berlusconi's early years (from a relatively modest family, he was a star student earning the highest marks in high school and university); on his beginnings in the construction industry (the sources of his funding have never been clarified, raising suspicions that the loans he drew on came from laundered Mafia money); and on his dramatic ascent into commercial television (the late Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi helped him to monopolize the market by smoothing the way on the legislative front).

All these writers have to hustle to find terminology to define a politician who is capable of (1) brazenly using his own and state TV channels for political purposes; (2) passing a series of disastrous laws that make it hard to convict him, including, in the age of Enron and Parmalat, one decriminalizing balance-sheet fraud; and (3) calmly disappearing from work for more than a month, as he did this winter, only to let it be known he had vanished to have a face lift. "Soap-opera democracy" comes to mind, but "totalitarian democracy" is the term Columbia University political scientist Giovanni Sartori settles on in his *Mala tempora* ("Evil Times"),

a collection of his articles from the daily paper *Corriere della Sera* on the Berlusconi phenomenon.

If totalitarian democracy sounds polemical, consider what the Prime Minister has to say. Last year Berlusconi, who had up until then refused to appear in the courtroom, agreed to make a carefully prepared "spontaneous declaration" before the court in Milan that is trying him for corrupting several Roman judges. "All citizens are equal before the law," said Berlusconi in his declaration, but he argued that the court should not be allowed to deliberate his case because "some citizens are more equal than others." The nod to *Animal Farm* seems to have been entirely unintentional. Berlusconi's statement is reprinted in Peter Gomez and Marco Travaglio's useful *Lo chiamavano impunità* ("They Called It Impunity"), a report on one of several corruption cases in which the Prime Minister is charged and which recently led to the conviction of his longtime attorney Cesare Previti, a Forza Italia senator.

By far the most ambitious of books about *Berlusconismo* is Paul Ginsborg's *Silvio Berlusconi: Television, Power and Patrimony*, published in Italy last year and now available in an updated English version. Ginsborg, an English-born professor of history who teaches at the University of Florence and who has written two masterful books on postwar Italian history—*A History of Contemporary Italy* and *Italy and Its Discontents*—is also known in Italy as one of the leaders of a protest movement that aims to prod the left to combat Berlusconi. His sober, thoughtful book will be of value not only to anyone interested in Italy but to anyone interested in how populist politics, money and control of the mass media's reservoir of fantasy can combine to override the democratic process.

Does Berlusconi, asks Ginsborg, repre-

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AGAINST

THE WAR

By JONATHAN SCHELL

Janeane Garofalo is a longstanding *Nation* reader.

sent "a new model of political control in modern democracy," or can he be dismissed, as *The Economist* did, as a "Burllesquoni," a jester improvising policy to suit his personal needs? Ginsborg argues forcefully that Berlusconi has a serious political project and that, like Rupert Murdoch, Jean-Marie Messier and Michael Bloomberg, he should be seen in the context of a "global TV oligarchy" and of other big stakeholders in the media and telecommunications business who have ventured into the political sphere or pull the strings backstage.

What makes Berlusconi novel, argues Ginsborg, is his ability to tap into a TV fantasy world of contented, enterprising families and abundant consumer goods, and use it to build political support for himself. To those escapist and materialist fantasies, Berlusconi adds the shine of his conspicuously displayed billions—princely villas in Lombardy, Sardinia and elsewhere, a giant yacht, a jet-set lifestyle. Among Italy's hardworking, acquisitive, tax-evading, profoundly conservative middle class Berlusconi's self-made fortune is a prize to be admired and emulated. His charm is lodged in an obsessive personality cult, the likes of which Italy has not seen since Mussolini. Not surprisingly, he has no rivals within his own party.

Although Berlusconi often dishes out the populist rhetoric, he has a neoliberal heart, Ginsborg insists, pointing to government plans to privatize and regionalize the national health system, promote private schools, obstruct the unions and condone rampant illegal building projects that despoil Italy's environment. No less neoliberal is Berlusconi's obsessive talk about *libertà*, by which he invariably means freedom from state interference.

That Berlusconi is a neoliberal is not, however, as obvious as it might seem, since the Prime Minister's legislative record has been very inconclusive. In *Berlusconi e gli anticorpi* Sylos Labini argues that Berlusconi is not a right-wing politician at all, just a power-hungry crony capitalist pursuing his own business interests. But when it comes to foreign policy, as Lapo Pistilli and Guelfo Fiore show in their useful survey, *Semestre Nero* ("Dark Semester"), Berlusconi is indisputably a man of the right. Against the wishes of some three-quarters of the Italian people, Berlusconi sided with Bush by sending troops to Iraq. And he has profoundly shifted Italy's stance on the Middle East by throwing his support to Ariel Sharon.

Perhaps what is most alarming about Berlusconi is his contempt for the rules of the game. Where another politician under

prosecution would at least pay lip-service respect to the judiciary, Berlusconi rails furiously against it: The magistrates are "left-wing Jacobins" pushing Italy "toward a police state," "dictators" who are "mentally deranged" and "worse than Fascism," a "cancer to eradicate." When that inflammatory, demagogic language is combined with laws that make the courts' work against him more difficult—such as one vastly complicating the task of transferring evidence from one country to another—and with plans to make the judiciary less independent, there is cause to be worried.

Yet when Berlusconi first appeared on the scene and won the election in 1994, the left was flummoxed. According to Ginsborg, it "never really understood what had hit it." Berlusconi fell ignominiously from power only a few months later, but when he returned to power in the 2001 election, the left was "in a coma" for months, Ginsborg says. And the center-left governments did nothing to stop the Berlusconi steamroller between 1995 and 2001. No law on conflicts of interest was passed, nor did the center-left make sure to pass a media law that would rethink the monopoly conditions that Berlusconi enjoys. Had it wanted to, the left could even have barred Berlusconi from office under a 1957 law, according to Labini. Instead, the center-left, under the leadership of Massimo D'Alema, spent years trying to negotiate constitutional reforms with Berlusconi's agreement, only to see him turn the tables on them at the last minute. Not only was no agreement reached but Berlusconi was legitimized and had a chance to regroup his forces, transforming his Forza Italia into a mass-based party and reassembling his right-wing coalition.

Today, after three years in power, it looks as if Berlusconi's support might be eroding. The economy is in ruins, his performance in government has been dismal and he is now scrambling to find a way to deliver the lower taxes that were among his campaign promises. The great communicator—with his simple, repetitive, upbeat messages—now sounds more like a broken record. In an attempt to boost his showing at the June 12–13 elections for the European Parliament, Berlusconi has placed himself at the top of the Forza Italia list (although he has no plans whatsoever to serve in Strasbourg). The country has been plastered with millions of dollars' worth of campaign posters showing his new, lifted face.

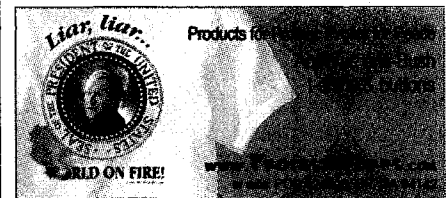
The European elections do not affect Berlusconi's mandate to govern Italy, but if Forza Italia takes a beating in the polls, it could set off a bitter struggle among his right-wing coalition partners, the racist and

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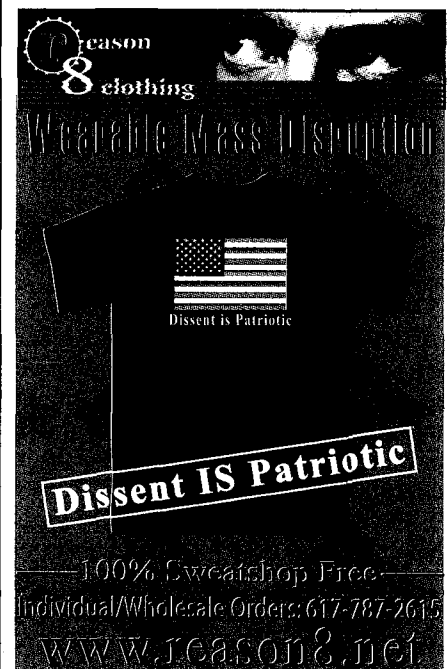


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xenophobic Northern League and the one-time neo-Fascist party, the National Alliance. Even if Berlusconi were to fall, he would leave behind a bitter legacy—a fiercely divided country, riven by a level of social conflict that hasn't been seen in Italy for many years. By bringing the Northern League into the government and giving it many more ministerial slots than its votes would merit, Berlusconi has allowed the most vicious of Italian parties to spread its hate message and work mayhem with

the state. (The recent heart attack and stroke of Umberto Bossi has now left the Northern League without a visible leader, and the Prime Minister will certainly try to poach their votes.)

But even if he is defeated, Berlusconi should not be underestimated. The Prime Minister has fought back with tenacity and ability once before. And it will take "years and untold labors," as Giorgio Bocca puts it, to repair the damage Berlusconi has done. ■

Don't Worry, Be Happy

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

ON PARADISE DRIVE: How We Live Now (and Always Have) in the Future Tense.

By David Brooks. Simon & Schuster. 304 pp. \$25.

David Brooks is a writer whose chief claim to fame is not what he says but where he says it. These days he says it twice a week in the *New York Times* and on PBS and NPR, where he functions as the tame conservative, the right-winger without flecks of foam on the sides of his mouth. A book written by a man thus placed will get talked about perforce, and given the marketing power his position accords him, he will attract attention. He is on the required review list. His books must be given a look-see, no matter how trivial and insipid they may be.

A look-see at Brooks's *On Paradise Drive* reveals old-fashioned, spread-eagle oratory groaning with passages such as:

whatever the nation's problems, America, and the idealism present in that word, are the solution. America is the solution to bourgeois flatness, to materialistic complacency, to mass-media shallowness, because America, with all its utopian possibilities, arouses the energies and the most strenuous efforts. America is the answer to insularity, to balkanization, to complacency, to timidity, because America is a set of compulsions pulling people out of their narrow and trivial concerns and lifting their sights to the distant hopes.

Brooks fails to mention that America is also good for teenage acne, children with reading disabilities and/or enuresis. For those of us in our sunset years, America has proven effective in lessening the debilitating effects of arthritis. America is good for you.

In *On Paradise Drive*, Brooks looks at how the great American middle stratum

lives (top- and bottom-income people are left for another time). But this is no *Travels With Charley*, for it is written by a man who, though he seems to have bounced about here and there, has no eye for the telling detail and no ear for the colorful quote. Though Brooks humbly likens his writing to Twain's and Mencken's, the best you can say for him as a writer is that he's fought the English language to a draw. Whereas Twain on the warpath was a sharpshooting rifleman and Mencken laid about with the broadsword, Brooks's literary weapon is the tweezers. Follicle by follicle, he snaps the hairs out. Painful but not so entertaining.

His travels led him to the conclusion that the middle is not an undifferentiated mass but a garden of subgroups chiefly distinguishable by how they spend their money. In a characteristically revelatory passage, Brooks writes:

Hispanics spend a far greater percentage of their income on footwear and clothing for children under two, and a far lower percentage on stationery and tobacco products than the average American consumer. Whites spend much more on entertainment and much less on clothing for teenage boys. Blacks spend more on poultry and telephones and less on furniture and books.

Judging from descriptions like that, Brooks seems to have spent the better part of the past twenty years below the gradient

in a think tank. He may be the last person on this continent to have discovered giant, stand-alone box stores like Wal-Mart and Home Depot. But if *On Paradise Drive* yields little of moment about contemporary America, it offers us a map of the mind of a right-winger who has cleverly packaged himself and is marketed as a cave-man with a throbbing heart and a kinder, gentler sensitivity. The Brookian gestalt is glimpsed in the following:

There is no one single elite in America. Hence, there is no definable establishment to be oppressed by and to rebel against. Everybody can be an aristocrat within his own Olympus. You can be an X Games celebrity and appear on ESPN2, or an atonal jazz demigod and be celebrated in obscure music magazines. You can be a short-story master and travel the nation from writers' conference to writers' conference, celebrated for your creativity, haircut, and style.... Ours is not a social structure conducive to revolution, domestic warfare, and conflict. The United States is not on the verge of an incipient civil war or a social explosion. If you wanted to march against the ruling elite, where exactly would you do it?

More to the point, why exactly would you write these words? Civil war? Domestic warfare? Social explosion? What can the man be thinking? The only people in the United States tortured by such turbulent dreams are crackpots, those among the very rich who are pursued by the fear that some of their money will be taken from them and naughty conservative publicists seeking to impute treason to those on their left.

These passages are revealing. The first sentence, when translated out of the original opaque, means that wealth and power have successfully disguised themselves and are safe from scrutiny. Every American man and every American woman, according to Brooks, is a king and queen in his or her small, meaningless, slightly contemptible, slightly humorous, compartmentalized world. With people organizing themselves into nothing more dangerous than skateboard clubs and long-haired writers' conferences, the possessors of power and property have nothing to fear.

On Paradise Drive is devoted to the glorification of ordinariness, of blinkered plodding, of going along to get along, of mastering the practice of not standing out. For the mediocre, the rewards can be rich. "Millionaires," Brooks writes of his favorite kind of people, "are not exactly Einsteins. The average millionaire in the U.S.

Nicholas von Hoffman, a columnist for the *New York Observer*, is the author of *Hoax*, just published by Nation Books.

had a collegiate GPA of about 2.92, a B-average. The average SAT score for the millionaires is 1190, good but not nearly good enough to get you into an Ivy League college." It is beyond explaining how such strange statistics are gathered or, perhaps, invented, but the point of publishing them is to restate the ancient conservative suspicion of brilliance, of wit, of anything smacking of instability or unpredictability and therefore of danger to the treasure hoard.

The right-winger substitutes *Sitzfleisch*, unrelieved and unrelenting labor, for flashy outbreaks of genius. With pride of country, Brooks proclaims that his fellow citizens are "the hardest-working people on the face of the earth. We work the longest hours and take the shortest vacations of any affluent people." The nonaffluent, most of the population of the planet, apparently take shorter vacations, perhaps because so many live in tropical climes where life is so pleasant and the trade winds so refreshing they don't need vacations. "Polls indicate," Brooks explains, that the American reluctance to recreate "is not all forced; far more than people in other lands.... Americans take the initiative to check in with work while they're supposedly on vacation." In the real world of water coolers and cubicles people "check in" because they know that when you come back from vacation your desk and your chair may be gone. But the man can seriously write that "for most of human history, people at the bottom of the income ladder worked longer than people at the top. But that's no longer true." Doubtless he can produce yet another one of his polls to back this stuff up, but in a land of two-, three- and four-job households, it's nuts. You can't tell me that those people with the house in Telluride, the apartments in New York and London and the place on the Côte d'Azur work harder than the people who clean their bathrooms. What Brooks is describing is not what is, but what right-wingers tell themselves is.

It follows that the book includes de rigueur grouching about the French, French intellectuals and the intelligentsia in general. In place of thought Brooks offers the reader litanies of brand-name products bought and owned by various statistical categories of people. The work positively suppurates with the results of polls and surveys proving that satisfaction reigns and our investments are safe. In a passage worthy of Dr. Pangloss, he writes:

I would like to think that an idealist flame does burn in every American split level, that every day American life is shaped by grand metaphysical visions, a holy sense of mission.... I would like

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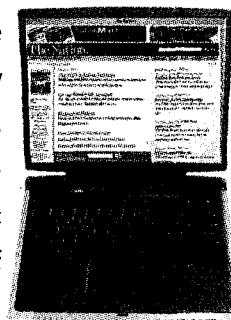
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to believe that we are all driven by some spiritual impulsion of which we are perhaps not even aware.

You may be sure that somewhere in his papers Brooks has a survey showing that three out of four Americans are impulsed every 9.4 seconds by grand metaphysical visions and/or facial tics.

The people of the United States may

need a decent system of public education or adequate healthcare, but one thing they do not need is another TV or radio program, another article or book telling them how terrific and contented they are. That is what David Brooks has given them, but isn't one of the traits of conservatism to give us more of what we already have too much of and to withhold what we have too little of and need? ■

MUSIC

The 'I' of the Beholder

DOUGLAS WOLK

MAGNETIC FIELDS

About fifteen years ago, looking for something to play on my college radio station, I cued up a reel-to-reel tape I'd found in a pile by the wall—and fell in love. The tape was by a local Boston band, Buffalo Rome, and the song was called “You Love to Fail.” “Maybe tomorrow I'll see love in your eyes;

then mine will die,” sang a woman with a voice like distilled water, almost without inflection. “You love to fail. That's all you love.” The instrumentation was shimmering, curiously static electronics; the melody was as heartbreaking as the words. I wondered if I'd ever again hear anything like it.

A year or so later, I discovered that Buffalo Rome wasn't just an anonymous one-off project. They'd changed their singer and their name; their mastermind, a strange little man named Stephin Merritt, was in the process of recording a CD as the Magnetic Fields, named after a book by André Breton and Philippe Soupault. That album, *Distant Plastic Trees*, came out only in England at first. A friend taped it for me, and I almost wore the tape out playing it for everyone I knew, and then copying it for most of them. Another friend released one of its songs as a single on his tiny Boston label, Harriet Records; “100,000 Fireflies” became a small classic of the American independent pop underground. Not a hit, exactly—the Magnetic Fields have never had a hit, or anything close to one. What they do have is a hard core of devotees.

Through the 1990s, the Magnetic Fields continued to be something of a secret, spread by word of mouth. Merritt took over singing, in his deadpan baritone; the band's

lineup stabilized to include guitarist John Woo, drummer/keyboardist/singer Claudia Gonson and cellist Sam Davol. Side projects emerged: The 6ths (named after the hardest word for lisps to pronounce—their first album was *Wasps' Nests*), in which Merritt's songs were sung by guest vocalists; Future Bible Heroes, a collaboration with Gonson and multi-instrumentalist Chris Ewen; a “goth-bubblegum” joke band, the Gothic Archies... And Merritt kept producing Magnetic Fields albums, refining his songwriting and developing increasingly eccentric sounds in the studio.

In late 1999, he pulled off a magnificent “stunt,” as he called it. *69 Love Songs* was exactly what it claimed to be—a three-CD set, with five vocalists singing Merritt-written love songs in every twentieth-century pop genre he could pastiche, parody or execute with a straight face. It got people's attention. I was there the first time Merritt played a dozen *Love Songs* in public, accompanied only by a ukulele, at a tiny East Village basement club with a dripping ceiling, and the first time the Magnetic Fields played all sixty-nine over two nights, at the Knitting Factory, a smallish TriBeCa club with a capacity of roughly 400 standing people. (Cheers erupted after the first chorus of “Papa Was a Rodeo”—which most of the crowd hadn't even heard before.) And I was there the last time they played the whole thing, to a sold-out Lincoln Center audience, as part of

the “American Songbook” series.

Since *69LS*, Merritt has released a second 6ths album, *Hyacinths & Thistles*; a couple of Future Bible Heroes discs; music for two stage adaptations of Chinese operas; a song for the audio editions of Lemony Snicket's books for children (Snicket's alter ego, Daniel Handler, sometimes plays accordion with the Magnetic Fields); and a handful of minor new tunes for two soundtracks, *Eban and Charley* and *Pieces of April*. But it's been almost five years since the Magnetic Fields released a proper album, and they've now moved from the mid-sized independent label Merge (home of scrappy rock artists including Superchunk and Neutral Milk Hotel) to the major label Nonesuch (home of distinctly non-scrappy, non-rock artists like Randy Newman and the Kronos Quartet).

I can't pretend to write about Merritt's work anymore with anything but a fan's obsessive affection and nitpickiness (and, full disclosure, I've gotten to be friendly with Gonson over the past couple of years). But Merritt is, above all, a formalist. He often seems to write songs about love, because that's traditionally an appropriate subject for what he *really* likes: pop songs. His new album is all about the subjectivity of love, which makes it somehow formally fitting to address it subjectively, as one of those devotees.

The title of the Magnetic Fields' new record is *i*—lower-case—a formal gesture if ever there was one. For one thing, all of its song titles begin with the letter I. They are, in fact, arranged in alphabetical order, from “I Die” through “It's Only Time.” (This was going to be the organizational principle behind *69LS* for a while, too, until good sense prevailed, but that set still begins with “Absolutely Cuckoo” and ends with “Zebra.”) And the lower-casing suggests that Merritt is trying to deflate the expectations for a follow-up to *69LS*. Thirteen of its fourteen songs have a first-person narrator, an “I,” almost always a diminished or lower-cased self—one who feels that he's undeserving of his object of desire. Counting *69LS* as three separate albums (it was released that way too), *i* is the ninth Magnetic Fields album; if their debut *Distant Plastic Trees* is a), then *i* is, well, i). But it could also mean the Roman numeral I: As the first major-label album by the project for which he's best known, this is Merritt's most vigorous attempt to break through to the mainstream of popular culture.

i is certainly the most “normal”-sounding album he's made so far. The band's

Douglas Wolk's book *James Brown Live at the Apollo* will be published by Continuum in August.

acoustic instruments are more prominent than they've been before on record; almost every track is populated by an impressive array of plucked, strummed, hammered and bowed devices, sometimes recorded to simulate the peculiar synthesizer textures of earlier albums. Merritt's songwriting, on the other hand, has scarcely changed. When I reviewed *69LS*, I made the error of comparing him to Cole Porter, as easy shorthand for "American popular song"—Lorenz Hart is probably closer to what he's got in mind, at least lyrically. (He's capable of the kind of super-condensed, old-fashioned wit that implies: "I mumble some jumble/You kiss me, I'm hist'ry/I'm tongue-tied and useless again." And the tiny dog he carries everywhere is named Irving, after Berlin.) His other songwriting ideal, though, is ABBA: the very antithesis of pop music as cult object. "I don't know why Whitney Houston doesn't do one of my songs," he complained, tongue only slightly in cheek, when I interviewed him some years ago. "A lot of them are blank enough for her to play around with, and have bland enough lyrics for the meaning to be in the singing rather than in the lyrics."

That's debatable. (Sample line from one of *i*'s mournful ballads: "This outpouring of emotion/As boring as an ocean/Is this what they used to call love?") In fact, he sings a lot of his own songs as if they're prefabricated machines that only need to be performed as written, affectlessly, to let the composition do its work. Merritt is a big fan of genre, because genres come with preconceptions, and that gives him something to upend. He loves to invert songwriting clichés, and to indulge in them. "I Looked All Over Town" ingeniously literalizes one of the laziest rhymes in the songwriter's dictionary, "clown" and "town"—the lyric concerns the narrator, wearing a clown suit, rising into the air as he holds one of his balloons—but also commits the almost-as-lazy "face"/"disgrace" rhyme.

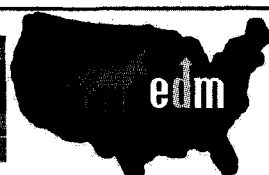
A longtime fan will inevitably find other nits to pick on *i*. For the first time, Merritt is repeating himself: "Infinitely Late at Night" is *69LS*'s "Blue You," but less so, and the same goes for "In an Operetta" (*69LS*'s "For We Are the King of the Boudoir"). "I Don't Believe You" is a re-recording of a six-year-old single. There's also the on-going issue of Merritt's scansion. An ideal lyric, conventionally, is one whose spoken rhythm fits its music, with stressed syllables and stressed beats in the same place. As usual, Merritt violates this rule rather cavalierly. He warps "infinite" to make it rhyme with "in it" in two different songs here; in a third, "Infinitely Late at Night" (sense a

theme?), there's a line that goes "I feel like I'm in a falling elevator"—and "falling" comes out with a heavy stress on the second syllable. And so on.

But "Irma"—the one song on *i* without a first-person narrator—inverts even that flaw. At first blush, it's a sweet little ditty, led by ukulele, that he's crooning absent-mindedly. He phrases the lyric exactly the way the melody suggests—and it makes no sense to the ear. The second verse, as sung, goes "Was never what it once was/Shouldn't really drive any more/Either as if in answer/With a sound like blowing up your." The meaning of the lyric is enjambed

about as far as it can be; the words on either side of the verse make it perfectly grammatical if it's punctuated correctly. The idea, perhaps, is that Merritt knows damn well where his words' sense and stress lie, and a little syllable-bending doesn't interfere with the sense of a pop lyric—especially when it's attached to a good-enough melody.

He's never been short of those. The centerpiece of *i* is "I Thought You Were My Boyfriend," a bitter, miserable and stunningly catchy disco song (an *acoustic* disco song); its tune and sentiment are essentially the photographic reverse of ABBA's "Take



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As they prepare for the July Convention, Democrats face a critical question – how wide a coalition do they want to build? The solid Democratic "base" represents less than 50% of the electorate. But many moderates and independents are closer to the Dems than Republicans on major issues. GOP victories in 2000 and 2002 required extensive borrowing of Democratic themes and programs.



Ruy Teixeira

In fact Republicans have only won national elections when they successfully portray themselves as closer to "average Americans" than "elitist" Democrats. Their strategy often succeeds because key swing groups like moderate white-collar suburbanites, socially tolerant evangelicals and non-union blue-collar workers and small businessmen clearly see that they are not represented in the Democratic Party in the same way as the party's traditional liberal constituencies.

In recent years, however, Republicans have embraced a bitter and vindictive vision of "politics as warfare" that alienates and disturbs many "middle of the road" voters. Democrats can win these voters' support if they offer them a meaningful "seat at the table" in the Democratic Party.

Liberals may worry that including these voters will move the party to the right. But liberals will actually have greater political influence if these centrist groups are inside a broad democratic coalition rather than outside.

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a Chance on Me." The bridge uses its awkward breaks and stresses to its advantage: "I wanted you tonight/I walked around a lot/Wishing you were here to keep me from sleeping/With anyone who might/Want me or even not/Some guys have a beer and they'll do anything." That "anything" is accented on its second syllable, but it sounds more emphatic that way: "a-ny-thing."

A lot of the triumphs of *i* are, as is often the case with Merritt these days, formalist and funny. There's "If There's Such a Thing as Love," a mock-exhausted Tin Pan Alley come-on that's less "let's do it" than "let's get it over with." ("When I was two and a half," Merritt mutters, "my mama said to me/Love is funny, you will laugh/Till the day you turn three.") There's "I'm Tongue-Tied," each of whose verses is twice as fast as the previous one. There's "I Don't Really Love You Anymore," one of his sly little ready-mades, with a chord progression as old as the Muses: "Think of me as just your fan/Who remembers every dress

you ever wore/Just a bad comedian/Your new boyfriend's better than."

But what Merritt actually is, even more than a formalist, is a romantic. He's just very guarded about it. After thirty-five minutes of jokes and feints, *i* ends with "It's Only Time," one of his most exquisite and least witty songs ever. "I'll walk your lands/And swim your sea," Merritt sings, his heart bared. And then, alongside a flash of atonality—perhaps feedback, perhaps just a treatment of Davol's cello: "Marry me. Marry me." Maybe establishing his ironist credentials for most of *i* makes it seem more meaningful when his walls of ice melt. Nonetheless, what Merritt wants—what the point of Popular Song, capital-P capital-S, is—is to be popular: to have an endless chorus of I's enthralled by a little *i*. As smart and amusing as his wordplay and genre-exercises are, they're not what's going to do the trick. The unabashed tenderness, gorgeousness and craft of songs like "It's Only Time" might. ■

FILMS

The Invisibles

STUART KLAWANS

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL • THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

When you go to the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival, you expect the screen to be a window onto the world. Feature-length documentaries will outnumber fiction films—the ratio this year is 16 to 3—and even in the latter category, fact will predominate over artifice. You will get glimpses into Israel and Palestine (*Paradise Lost, One Shot*), Peru (*What the Eye Doesn't See*), the two Koreas (*Repatriation*), India and Pakistan (*Born Into Brothels, For a Place Under the Heavens*), Africa (*Liberia: An Uncivil War*) or Iran (*Leila*); and however maddening, disquieting, bracing or astonishing these views might be, you look forward to seeing them directly, as if through nothing more than a sheet of glass. What you might not expect—although you get it anyway in this seventeenth annual edition of the festival, running June 11–24 at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater—is a riddle: When is a window not a window?

The answer: When it's in *Persons of Interest* by Alison Maclean and Tobias Perse.

Persons of Interest addresses the cases of about a dozen of the Muslim men in the United States who were imprisoned after September 11, 2001, on slight charges, if

any at all, and held without trial for a year or more. You already know, of course, that our authorities shut away many people back then for nothing more than being named Muhammad. You also know, without believing a word of it, Attorney General Ashcroft's claim that he was rounding up only terrorists, or those who knew terrorists, or maybe lived down the block from somebody whose second cousin knew someone. But unless you belonged to the family or legal team of a detainee, you probably do not know the name and face of anyone who was locked away, nor could you readily get such information on your own. Our government prefers not to say who, or how many, it held. (Human Rights Watch estimates the number at more than 5,000.) So Maclean and Perse have done us a valuable service by showing some of these people and their families and letting us hear their stories.

Window metaphors suggest themselves: The filmmakers have shined a light on the situation, or let in fresh air. And, sure enough, the interviews take place in a bare room with whitewashed walls, with a glowing window niche at the left.

Then, about halfway through the film, the camera moves around the room until it offers a glimpse through that niche, which you see is not a window at all. The room is built on a soundstage. The niche opens onto a view of electrical cables and floodlights.

If *Persons of Interest* had a different subject matter, you might interpret this revelation as a routine gesture of academic skepticism. Yes, the film is a representation. Yes, the stories being told are stories (apart from the claims to truth that they make). But after more than half an hour of listening to people's bewilderment and outrage and sense of betrayal (so many insist that they came to America to be free), after watching these witnesses break down in tears or hunch into themselves or lift their faces as if pleading with an unseen judge, I lost my breath at the sight of that dark enclosure where an opening had been promised. There is no play of appearances in the window that is not a window, no liberating distance from the subject matter or the self, but only suffocation. The outside has disappeared.

And what if I had seen that nonwindow on a different week? I watched *Persons of Interest* around the same time that Mr. Bush made his reassuring declaration that he would tear down Abu Ghraib prison: a public relations ploy that might have been suggested to him by Homer Simpson, and was pronounced as if under Homer's tutelage. Who else would expect to be praised for destroying evidence, and in a criminal case brought against himself? No one laughed at the speech, though. The giddiness is gone even from the war party, many of whose members now adopt a somber tone to boast of their growing wisdom. Even they know there's no sunshine behind that opening toward which Mr. Bush points, but only machinery for maintaining an illusion.

In this year's Human Rights Watch festival, the films show you Peruvians struggling with their false-front democracy; Koreans grappling with the mutually reinforcing lies of North and South; Palestinians traveling through a homeland that seems to vanish right under their feet (*Like Twenty Impossibles*, by Annemarie Jacir); good citizens of Illinois tearing holes through the fictitious justice of the death penalty (*Deadline*, by Katy Chevigny and Kirsten Johnson). Whatever the individual merits of these films—I believe they're variable—they all set you thinking about what a real

outside might be, there, beyond that window we can't get through.

For information on the series, go to www.hrw.org/iff.

The balance of nature: Because climate change strikes so rapidly in *The Day After Tomorrow*—something to do with “a critical desalinization point” in the Atlantic Ocean, leading to immense down-drafts of “supercooled air from the toposphere”—the plot needs to compensate by moving very, very slowly. Within days, hours really, of fictional time, the Statue of Liberty is encased up to its shoulders in a frozen sea, as shown in the ubiquitous ads; but in the real time of the movie theater, you wait a whole hour for the hero merely to predict what you’ve paid to see.

Not that you’ve had to wait for computer-generated mayhem. Writer-director Roland Emmerich, the Irwin Allen of the digital era, is quick to supply whatever you want, so long as it’s things going smash. Before impetuous he-man scientist Dennis Quaid can utter the words “new Ice Age,” Emmerich has treated you to a literal cliffhanger in Antarctica; a storm in Tokyo with hailstones the size of bowling balls (“Aieee!” cry the Japanese, crashing their motor scooters into storefronts at the first sign of trouble); the destruction of Los Angeles by giant tornadoes (which wreak havoc, most particularly, upon a sexually active TV weatherman); the flash-freezing in Scotland of helicopters sent to rescue the royal family (goodbye, royals); and, as the buildup to Act Two, the inundation of Manhattan, starting with an upsurge of sewer water. Notice how the thrill of grand-scale violence is tempered by the coziness of clichés: New York is filthy, LA lascivious, Tokyo hysterical, Britain stiff in its upper lip. This typecasting of entire populations within a plot of equally grandiose banality was also Emmerich’s procedure in his big hit of the Clinton Administration, *Independence Day*. (He’s had other credits since then—although, for some reason, the ads don’t flog *The Day After Tomorrow* as the new movie by the director of *Godzilla* and *The Patriot*.) But *Independence Day* at least featured Jeff Goldblum, Will Smith and monsters from outer space. *The Day After Tomorrow* threatens you with snow and ice and is correspondingly white, in the worst sense of the word. This is your Connecticut investment banker’s apocalypse.

Throughout the film’s second hour, the main part of the cast is holed up claustrophobically in the New York Public Library, where the only destructive pleasure available is book-burning. Dennis Quaid, meanwhile, slogs through the snow toward these

survivors (it’s a matter of being a good father), while his movie wife, Sela Ward, is busy with her own nurturing back in Washington, DC, caring for a little boy who has cancer. Imagine a film with the pace of an IV drip; think of a movie that proceeds as if on cross-country skies, into a blinding headwind.

Nothing enlivens these proceedings except for the dropping of two or three political sarcasms. These, and a clumsy attempt by the Bush Administration to discourage government scientists from commenting on the movie, have been enough to convince some anti-Bush activists to embrace *The Day After Tomorrow*, even though Emmerich’s implicit message is that the doom is upon us, it’s too late to act. Why, the fine people at MoveOn.org (who otherwise deserve every measure of support) have pegged one of their organizing drives to the film, with the assistance of Al Gore. Next, perhaps, they’ll buy out a screening of *Van Helsing*, to deplore Bush’s anti-vampire policies.

The Day After Tomorrow is (to use technical language) a piece of crap. Maybe certain leftists imagine they can use it to promote their agenda; but they’re the ones serving the movie, rather than the other way around. Think twice before you put yourself through a truly cryogenic experience at the movies—and all for the sake of watching alarming fake reports from Rupert Murdoch’s Fox News (*there’s a novelty*) embedded in a film from Murdoch’s Twentieth Century Fox.

Screening Schedule: Nation readers in the New York area who want to warm up for the Human Rights Watch festival might want to catch the tail end of another good series at the Walter Reade Theater, “Open Roads: New Italian Cinema” (through June 10). This year, the survey of contemporary Italian filmmaking includes a droll and sharp-witted political satire by Paolo Virzi, *Caterina va in città* (“Caterina in the Big City”), about a high school girl from the sticks who enters a big, prestigious school in Rome and begins bouncing between the cliques: this one made up of the daughters of George Bush and Dick Cheney (so to speak), and that one of the children of Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins. Sergio Castellitto delivers a sensational performance, at once hilarious and lacerating, as Caterina’s father, a schoolteacher who is aggressively proud of his worldly wisdom but knows only one thing, that other people are more successful than he. For information: www.filmlinc.com.

Coming up at New York’s Film Forum, June 23–29, is an eleven-film survey of con-

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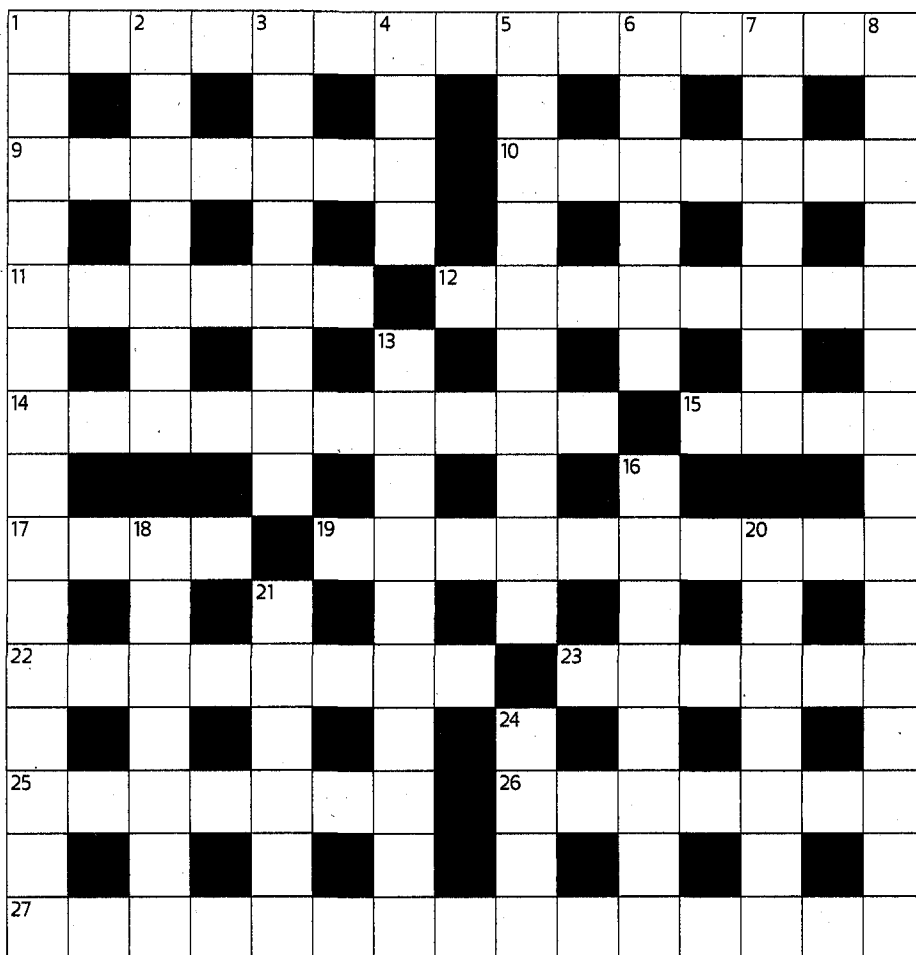
FRANK W. LEWIS

ACROSS

- 1 Leave the old city to the Spanish, with nothing but a dismantled gun to point—and wait here, possibly. (9,6)
- 9 What one might have to do with bad habits is run wildly around a crooked lane. (7)
- 10 A Native American who takes the soldier's food, when about to act strangely. (7)
- 11 To forgive someone for trespassing is sort of left this way. (3,3)
- 12 Not a cattle transport—rather, one in the competition that features such as your ordinary jalopy. (5,3)
- 14 This actor goes clean to the top—particularly in a regal role with Anna. (3,7)
- 15 He made a pointless comeback, being an early gardener. (4)
- 17 Could this preposition be considered “Not U”? (4)
- 19 As the Germans say, “Ah Rome!”—as the Italians say with a somewhat shaky finish—“But it’s lacking in color!” (10)
- 22 The man in Paris who could be expected to have us in more? (8)
- 23 Painter of *The Soldier and the King*. (6)
- 25 The old country, now mainly Algeria, could be like revolutionary India getting back a letter from Greece. (7)
- 26 Does he cry, “Ye Gods! I’m going to kill you, when I make up my mind about it!” (7)
- 27 What happens when you are sworn to secrecy? You just don’t know! (3,5,3,4)

DOWN

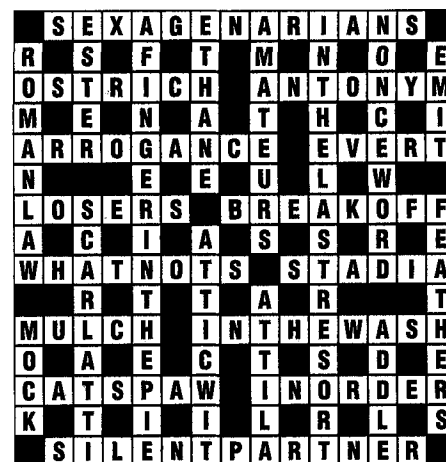
- 1 You might when you do this up in your billfold—or make a particularly good investment. (6,4,5)
- 2 Pertaining to the roof of your mouth, but it’s like a castle without me, subjectively. (7)
- 3 To state something again causes the sort of fear with a solid foundation. (8)



- 4 That's where some ashes went with the old city going in opposite directions. (4)
- 5 Right from the seat of authority—not quite exact, getting heard improperly. (2,8)
- 6 Mexican painter, alternatively where Dorothy found herself with a little company. (6)
- 7 Saw the way some purists like their tea. (6)
- 8 American composer came up when about to draw D, possibly—to act very good! (6,9)
- 13 I can bring it up with a religious man, but it wouldn't be right! (10)
- 16 Supposedly it should be made of the stuff that's more behind, according to Marc Antony. (8)
- 18 A bird makes the main mistake in getting out wrongly... (7)

- 20 ...with other birds as well. (7)
- 21 A sort the French light up. (6)
- 24 Relating to a form of poetry seen in a period I can identify. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2944



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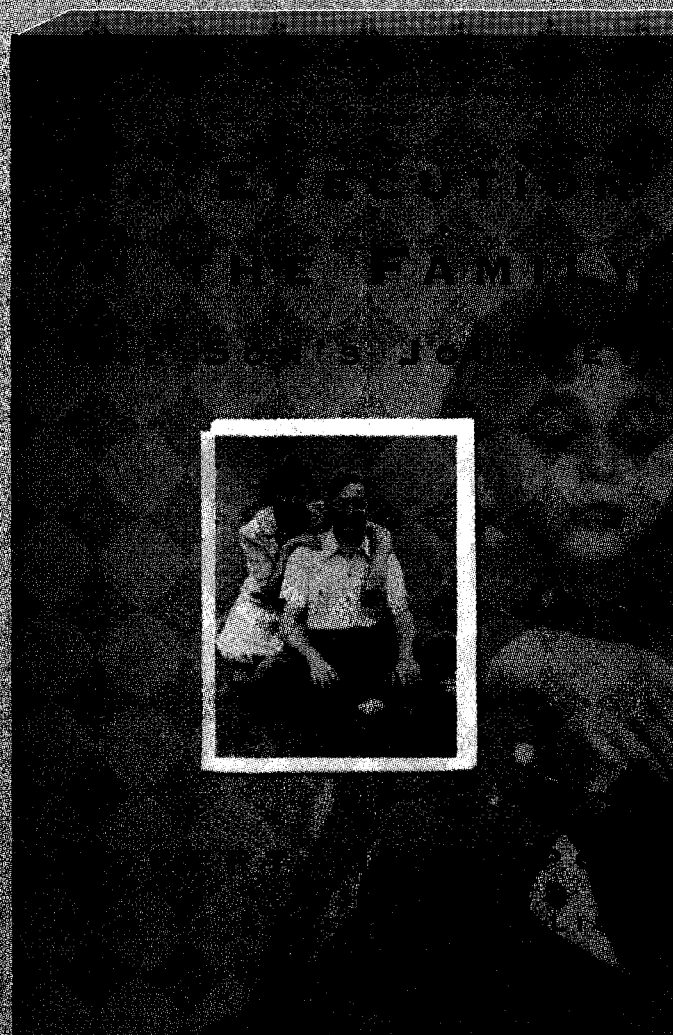
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